

THE
First, Last.

2

OR,

The Formal Hypocrite further
from Salvation, (as to the Way of
God's ordinary working) than the
Prophane Sinner.

Being the Substance of several

SERMONS

Preached in Course at a LECTURE
in the Countrey, By J. O.

A Discourse tending to draw the Prophane
Sinner to God, by working on his Hope,
and to drive the Formalist out of his
equality, by working on his Fears.

Text 3. 5. Having a form of godliness, but denying
the power thereof, from such turn away.

Gal. 3. 3. For we are the circumcision, which worship God
in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no
confidence in the flesh.

LONDON, Printed for R. Boulter, at
the Turkey-Head, in Cornhill. 1666.

First Part

OF

The General Principles of
the Science of the Mind
and the Nature of the
Human Soul.

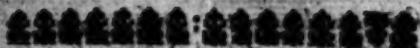
Second Part

OF THE
NATURE AND EXTENT OF
THE HUMAN MIND.

IN WHICH
THE SEVERAL FACULTIES
OF THE MIND ARE
DESCRIBED AND
THEIR OPERATION
EXPLAINED.

BY
JOHN LOCKE
ESQ.

Printed for J. Sturges,
at the Golden-Anchor in
St. Dunstons Church-yard, 1693.



TO the PARISHIONERS
of E. and W. in the County of
D. Grace and Peace from God
the Father, and from our Lord
Jesus Christ.

IT is an undoubted Truth, pro-
nounced by Truth its self, That
except a man be born again, he
cannot see the Kingdom of God,
Joh. 3. 3. That Flesh and Blood can-
not inherit the Kingdom of God, nor
corruption Incorruption. Such is the ^{1 Cor. 15.} so.
connexion betwixt Conversion and
Salvation, Holiness and Happiness,
That I may truly say, (yet not de-
rogating from the infinite worth of his
Sufferings) that Christ cannot save
an unconverted Soul; he saves none
from Hell, but whom he saves from
their sins; nor will free-Grace it
self save a graceless person. It is
therefore one main Piece of a Mini-

first employment; (whose work is
the salvation of souls) to endeavour
the bringing of man from self to
Christ, from sin to holiness; to deal
with them, as Ambassadors for
Christ, as though God did beseech
them by us, even to pray them in
Christ's stead, that they will be recon-
ciled to God, 2 Cor. 5. 20. In order
to this great End, nothing seems to me
more effectually conducing, then the
discovery and removal of those
things, which are the ordinary impe-
diments of Conversion, amongst
which these two are very common.

1. Some think they are past hope,
they are in their own apprehensions
out of mercies reach; and therefore,
either desperately, or despairingly
throw away their own souls.

2. Others think they are past fear,
that they are escaped the wrath to
come; say, as Agag. 1 Sam. 15. 32.
Surely the bitterness of death is
past; when, alas, they do but de-
ceive

ceive themselves with a vain ~~flatter~~ ^{flattery},
and are but in a cleaner way to
Hell.

The first of these is incident to
gross Sinners, when it pleases God to
awaken their Consciences, and cause
a Dart of Conviction to stick in
their hearts; Yea, the least (in dis-
covered, and set home to purpose on the
soul, is apt to work this way: Nor
can I think that those Ranting, Roar-
ing Desperado's, who spend their
days in Riot and Excess, and com-
mit all uncleanness with greed-
iness, are altogether free from such
thoughts.

The second is the common Remora
of the Formalist's Conversion, who
flatter himself in his own eyes, till
his iniquity be found hateful. Now
to discover to the former, their
grounds of hope, upon their Humble,
Penitent return to God; and to the
other, the cause they have to fear least
they be cast-off by God, seems the most

probable rational way to prevail with them, in order to their Conversion and Salvation.

This was the Design of these poor Labours, when Presented to your Ears from the Pulpit; and upon the same account are they now Presented to your Eyes from the Press. If thou art (Reader) in either of these conditions, (and how great a part of the Christian World will be found in the one or other of them!) here is something in this small Treatise, that may, by the blessing of him that teacheth to profit, be of use and advantage to thee. Or if thou be an Israelite indeed, thou wilt find something that may suit thy condition, and that may put thee upon more vigour and activity in Gods way.

I shall not trouble you with any Apology, either for my self or the Works weakneses (the Lord knows) abound in both: Nor is it the design of this poor Labour to satisfy thy Curiosity,

riosity, or please thy Fancy, but
(which is far higher) to profit and
edifie thy Soul. That this may be the
Fruit of it, is the hearty prayer of
him, who desires to be, and earnestly
beggs thy prayers that he may be

A publick Helper on of thy

Faith and happiness,

J. O.

A 4 THE

and, you'll find, to, which
(which is far higher) to profit and
enrich the soul. But this may be the
fruit of it, in the heart's prayer of
him, who desires to be, and earnestly
desires to be, that he may be

A public helper of the

Kind and happiness

J. O.

A 4 THE

The First, Last, &c.

Matthew 21, latter part of 21. Verse.

*Verily I say unto you, That the Publicans
and the Harlots go into the Kingdom of
God before you.*

CHAP. L.

*A Threefold use of Parables, the Text
Divided and Explained, the Doctrine
Proposed and Proved by Scripture.*

Parables in Scripture are used
especially upon three accounts:
First, Judicially, to
blind the eyes of those who
wilfully close their eyes against the light;
Mark 4. 11, 12. Secondly to Illustrate
the Truth to those that are willing to
understand, Job 3. 12. *If I have said vain
things, &c.* i. e. Heavenly things
illustrated

illustrated by Earthly Parables and Resemblances. Thirdly, to blind men at first, that they may see better afterwards; or to make them own their sin and condemn themselves unawares in a third person, which directly they would not do. Of this sort is *Nathan's* Parable to *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12. and many of *Christ's* Parables to the Jewes; two whereof we find in this Chapter, *viz.* That of the two Sons commanded to work in the Vineyard, *vers.* 28, 33. and that of the Vineyard let out to the ingrateful Husbandmen, *vers.* 33. 42. The Text in hand is the Addition and Application of the former, wherein our Saviour wrestled from the Priests and Elders (for to them especially the Parable was spoken) a sentence of condemnation against themselves; under the resemblance of that Son, who said, I go Sir, but went not. (Yes, forceth them to judge the Publicans and sinners (shadowed by the other Son) better and happier then themselves: having brought them to acknowledge the Premises, in the Text he plainly lays down the Conclusion. The words are an Assertion; in which observe,

2. The Assertor; Jesus Christ, who
was Truth it self.

3. The note of Assertion, or Assertion
tion; Verily.

3. The Assertion it self; wherein there
is observable,

1. A Collation, or comparison betwixt the Publicans and Elders, and the Publicans and sinners.

2. A Prelation, or preferring the latter before the former.

3. The thing wherein they are preferred, viz. their greater readiness to embrace the Gospel, and to go into the Kingdom of God. — A little for explanation.

[Publicans and Harlots] are here Synecdochical y put for the worst of sinners; for so they were deservedly esteemed.

Publicans were Officers belonging to the Romans, (though, for the most part, Jews by Nation) not much unlike our Excise-men, or Tole-gatherers, amongst whom, some were, as it were, Farmers, (such I suppose was Zaccheus, Luke 19. 2.) Others of an inferiour Rank, Collectors: both given to Rapine, Oppression, Injustice, Violence, and were the

ROMANS

Power chief instruments to grind the
 faces of their poor Brethren: hereby
 contracting upon them the just odium of
 the Jewish Nation. Hence that surable
 counsel of *Jesus* to them, *Luk.* 3. 13. *Ex-*
act no more than that which is appointed you.
 Upon this account *Zachew* (as a special
 testimony of his sincere repentance) of-
 fers a fourfold restitution of any thing
 got by false accusation, *Luk.* 19. 8. That
 being the sin of his calling. Yea so wick-
 ed they were, that in Scripture, Heathen
 and Publican are equivalent, *Mat.* 18. 17.
 So that when our Saviour would bear the
 Jews out of their carnal confidences, and
 high conceits of themselves and their do-
 ings, he ordinarily compares them with
 Publicans, shewing them, that they either
 come up, no higher then they, as *Matth.*
 5. 46, 47. or, that they fall short of them,
 as *Luk.* 18. 10-14. and this Text. Yea,
 so wicked were they thought, that it was
 judg'd a crime in our Saviour to converse
 with them, *Matth.* 9. 11. and cast upon
 him, as a grapt opprobrium, that he was
 a friend of Publicans and sinners, *Matth.*
 11. 19.

Harlots (their sin is too well known
 amongst us) *Gr.* *πορναι* & *συγκατακταται* *Kendor*:
 properly

properly those, *qua corpora habent venale*, who prostitute their bodies for money. If you would see their wickedness, read *Proverbs* 6. and 7. Chapters, and 23, 27, &c. Some think that 27. Chapter to be Allegorical, and that under the shadow of an Harlot, is represented the deceitful and destructive nature of sin: if so, this sin is exceeding sinful, which (though but one species) yet contains in it the whole nature and properties of its genus; and is as it were, an Epitome of all sin.

[*Kingdom of God*] is used in many senses; to pass by other, it is taken sometimes for the state of Grace, the Church Militant; Sometimes for the state of Glory, or Church Triumphant; here both may be taken in, the one as the Way, the other as the End. So that the plain sense is, Publicans and Harlots, notorious vile sinners, sooner repent, believe, embrace the Gospel, &c. so consequently come to Heaven, then you formal, self-conceited Jews, Priests and Elders.

[*Before you*]: The speech is something improper, (as *Beza* notes) *Improprie dicuntur praeire, quos nemo sequitur*. They go before you; i. e. they are saved, and you

you perish; as appears by comparing this with *Matth. 8. 11, 12. The children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness. They upon Faith and Repentance are made happy in glory, while you continuing in unbelief and impenitency fall into eternal perdition.*

The words thus opened, take the sense of them in this plain Doctrinal Proposition or Conclusion.

Doctr. That the vilest sinners, Publicans and Harlots, &c. often believe, repent and are saved, while Pharisaical, self-justifying Formalists continue in Unbelief and Impenitency, and so perish eternally.

Proof. Thus you see it was in the course of *John's* preaching, *vers. 31.* and thus it fell out in our Saviours preaching. *Levi* the Publican becomes *Matthew* the Evangelist, *Luke 9. 27.* with *Matth. 10. 3.* *Zacchaeus* the chief of the Publicans, and very rich, becomes a Son of *Abraham*; i. e. a Penitent believer: *Luke 19. 9.* *Magdalen* the Harlot, is made *Magdalen* the Convert, *Luke 7. 37.*—Nor was it onely so with these two or three; but, *Mark 2. 15.* Many Publicans and sinners

Sinners followed him, Luke 7. 29, 30. The Publicans justified God—But the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, &c. Nay, Luke 15. 12. Then drew near unto him all the Publicans and Sinners for to hear him, and the Pharisees and Scribes murmured—Amongst these self-conceited, self-justifying Formalists, there was but *Unus & alter*, one Nicodemus, one Joseph, one Paul; and not many more that I remember. That question, John 7. 48. Have any of the Rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? implies the rarity of such men coming in. So that as it is said of Ministers, *Quis unquam vidit Clericum penitentem*; (though I hope such are no black Swans in this age) so it might have been said in that age, *Quis unquam vidit Phariseum penitentem*? Who ever saw a Pharisee, a Scribe, a Ruler, a Lawyer repenting? Nor was it otherwise in the Apostles time; (the immediate Successors of Christ) you will find throughout the History of the Acts, that the formal Jews were the greatest contemners of the Apostles Doctrine, and the most deadly inveterate haters and persecutors of their persons; while whole

Cities

Cities and Countries of the prophane
 Idolatrous Gentiles, readily embrace,
 steadfastly believe, and cordially obey
 their Gospel. Take a few instances
 among many, *Acts* 8. 5. — *Philip* hath
 incredible success in *Samaritan*, the Gos-
 pel is received there with great joy, v. 8.
 which the Jews had driven away from
 them by a great persecution, *vers* 14.
 So *Acts* 13. 45. The Jews seeing the mul-
 titude, are filled with envy — contradict
 blasphemous, but *vers* 48. The Gentiles are
 glad, and glorify the word of the Lord, and
 as many as were ordained to eternal life, be-
 lieved; whereas the Jews, v. 50. do
Quidem movere lapidem, stir up the devil
 and honorable women, and the chief men of
 the City, and raised persecution against *Paul*
 and *Barnabas*, and expelled them out of
 their Country. Go to the 14 Chapter, at
Iconium a great multitude both of Jews
 and Greeks believed, v. 1. But then,
 v. 2, the unbelieving Jews stirred up the
 Gentiles, &c. — At *Lysra*, the Idolat-
 rous people mistaking the Apostles, for
 their supposed Heathenish Demies, are
 scarce restrained from doing sacrifice
 unto them. Here was a wide door open-
 ed, and might in all probability have
 proved

proved more effectual, had not the inveterate enemies of the Gospel, the carnal Jews, stopt the passage by enraging the people against the Apostles, as you may see, *v. 19.* Go on to the 17. Chapter, *v. 1. 5.* You find the Apostles successfully preaching the Gospel at *Thessalonica*, a great multitude of devout Greeks believing, *and of the chief women not a few, v. 4.* But *v. 5.* the Jews their old adversaries oppose, &c. The like success they had at *Berea, v. 10, 11, 12.* and the same opposers, *v. 13.* At *Corinth, Acts 18. 8.* with *12, 13.* At *Rome*, though few of the Jews believed, *Acts 28. 23.* — to the end; yet the seed which *Paul* cast there, sprung up into a flourishing Gentile Church, whose Faith was spoken of throughout the whole World, *Rom. 1. 8.* 'Tis needless to heap up instances of this nature, they being common and obvious to any that observe them. Thus you see that *de facto* it was so; (and the case is not much alter'd now) that it was much more ordinary and frequent, to see a penitent Publican or Harlot, or the like gross Sinner, then to see a proud, self-justifying Pharisee, or Formalist, repenting and embracing Christ.

CHAP. II.

A first sort of Reasons, (viz. what may move God to call the Prophane, rather then the Formalists) Negatively, and Positively.

NOW it will be well worthy of our pains, to enquire into the Reason of this evident Truth, and those may be two wayes considered.

1. *Quoad Deum*, in reference to God, what may move God rather to call Publicans and Harlots, &c. then Self-conceited Formalists?

2. *Quoad media salutis*, in reference to the means of Salvation: Why the Preaching of the Gospel should more frequently and kindly operate upon Publicans and Harlots, (seemingly the most incapable subjects) then upon Morally Righteous, and seemingly holy persons, who may seem more then half-brew'd and squared, even ready to be lai'd into the building of the Church?

Concerning the first sort of Reasons, it is not alwaies safe, I confess, to enquire into the secrets of the Almighty; I shall therefore endeavour according to the
Apostles

Apostles Rule, *Rom. 12. 3.* Μὴ ὑπερβαίνειν τὴν μέτρον τῆς οἰκονομίας; To be wise unto sobriety: Nor shall I enter any further into this Labyrinth then I am guided by the thread of Scripture; something I shall hint negatively, and something affirmatively.

I. Negatively: And first, It is not from any want of Power in God to make the means of Grace effectual to the Conversion of one as well as another, *Gen. 18. 14.* Is any thing too hard for the Lord? Suppose the Conversion of a Formalist a work of more difficulty then of a Profane Sinner; yet to Infinite Power all things are alike feisable; to Infinite Wisdom all mysteries alike discernable, to Infinite Mercy all Sins alike Pardonable.

Nor, Secondly, is it to be supposed; that there is more of merit in the one, then in the other, to induce God to call the one, and pass by the other: Nay, if this might carry it, we should rather imagine that the moral, formal person should be called, and the profane cast off; The former being (at least in appearance) like Stone or Timber, almost prepared for the Building, the other like

B 2

crooked

crooked, knotty Timber: or rugged Stones, which require abundance of pains in hewing and squaring, before they can be fitted for God's use: so that if merit, or that congruous, previous disposition which the Papists dream of, were any inducement to move God; then it's likely the Formalist, and civilly righteous Person, should be the first in God's Eye: But the Truth is, God orders it otherwise, that it may appear, *That it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, &c.*

Rom. 9. 10

And then, Thirdly, Eeast of all is it to be imagined, that God calleth the Publican, Harlot, or other Profane Sinner, as having any greater delight in them as such: No surely, sin is the sole object of God's hatred; *Hab. 1. 13. He is of pure eyes that behold iniquity.* And for Publicans and Harlots, whom doth God more abhor? *Isa. 5. 1-5. Oppression, and grinding the Faces of the Poor* (which was the Publicans sin) *cries in Gods Ears.* And *Habakkuk. 2. 11, 12. The Stone shall cry out of the Wall, &c.* and for Harlots, *see Hab. 1. 3. 4. Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge;* Far be it from us, to think that God therefore calleth such, because

because he takes complacency in them as such: No, when they are called, they must come home by weeping Cross; they must cleanse their hands, and purifie their hearts, before they can have any Communion with the unspotted Majesty of Heaven. This *Negatively*.

2. *Affirmatively*, to make it evident to all the World, that he is no respecter of persons; that there is nothing out of himself, which is the least inducement to him to call one, or reject another. Particularly:

1. To depress Man's Merit, *1 Cor. 1. 26-30.* Not many wise men after the flesh, &c. are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the World to confound the wise, &c. And why so? The reason is rendred, *v. 29.* That no flesh should glory in his presence. God's design is, to exclude man's boasting, *Rom 3. 27. Eph. 2. 9.* And what more effectual way to do it then this?

2. To exalt his own Mercy, (a necessary consequent of the former) Man's Merit, and God's Mercy being like a pair of Scales or Buckets, as the one rises, the other falls. This you see, *Jer. 9. 13. Rom. 9. 13. Eph. 2. 7.* When those are called, justified,

justified, sanctified and saved, who were the vilest and basest of men, the greatest of sinners; and in the mean while, others of high Parts, moral Accomplishments, of much seeming Sanctity, rejected. Oh, what admiring thoughts must such needs have to all eternity, of the freeness of God's Mercy! See 1 Tim. 1. 12, & 16. This will fill their mouths with the High Praises of the most High God, and make them strive to raise their hearts to the highest pitch of Thankfulness. Thus much for the Reasons respecting God.

CHAP. III.

A second sort of Reasons (viz. Why the Word sooner works on the Profane, than the Formalist) in general.

2. **B**Ut that which more concerns us to enquire into, is, Why the means of Salvation hath an easier influence upon, and finds readier acceptance with the Publican and Harlot, &c. then with the Formalist and hypocritical Professor? For since God ordinarily works by means, and that means ordinarily hath more or less operation, accord-
ing

ing to the greater capacity, or incapacity of the subject it meets with; why should not the Word rather find entertainment into the hearts of the Moral Formal person, then the Prophane Sinner?

In general take this account of it; There are more obstructions and impediments lye in the way of the Gospel, to hinder its work upon the Formalist, then upon the Prophane: though in respect of God's absolute power it is alike easie; yet in respect of his ordinary way of working, it is more difficult to convert the former than the later: And these Obstructions, are either, 1. *Ab intrâ*: or, 2. *Ab extrâ*.

Sect. 1. *Inward Impediments of the words effect upon the Formalist, viz. such as are in himself.*

1. *Ab intrâ*. There are many things in the Formalist himself to hinder his Conversion, which are not found in the Prophane.

Reason 1. It is much more difficult to convince a Formalist of Sin, (which is a necessary Antecedent to Conversion) then a Prophane person; and this I make out by a twofold consideration.

1. It is evident that man, every man, is naturally

naturally averse to Conviction: Like an old Thief, that will stand it out as long as he can, will justify himself, and plead, Not guilty. Sin and Shifting came into the world together. Adam laies the fault upon his Wife, she upon the Serpent, *Gen.* 3. 11, 12, 13. Thus the Jews deal with God, they put him to prove, *Ier.* 2. 23, 29, 35. and stand upon their own justification. So often in *Malachi*, Chap. 1. 7. and 2. 13, 14, 17. and 3. 7, 8, 13. *Wherein have we polluted thee? And wherein have we robbed thee? And what have we spoken so much against thee?* They will not own their sin and shame. Man is loath to see and own his fault; 'tis death to him to be found guilty; as *Iob* 24. 15, 17. *The eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the twilight; -- If one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death: till we deal with them, as Tamar with her Father in Law, Judah, Gen.* 38. 25. *Produce the Signet Bracelets and Staff;* undeniable testimonies of their guilt, Sinners will not be convinced. How will they deny, elude, excuse, extenuate, and as *Michal*, lay an Image in the Bed that *David* may escape? cloak their sin with the name of vertue; that the

the Hue and Cry of the Word may not find it out? A Fig-leaf rather than nothing shall cover their nakedness. 'Tis discernable in the best, *David* owns not his sin, till it be directly charg'd upon him, *Thou art the man*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7. *Isa* (though a good man, 2 *Chr.* 4. 2.) is wroth with the Seer, puts him in a prison-house, and is in a rage with him, 2 *Ch.* 16. 10. because of his plain and home reproof. Man, like a stout enemy, will not yield so long as he hath any Fortrefs to fly to. And then

2. The Formalist hath more shifts and evasions, then the prophane Sinner; he hath more to say for himself, more excuses and pretences to cloak his sin withal: as some wild Beasts have many Burrows, or Shelters to fly to when pursued; *Achan* confesses not, till his very person be taken. Though the Tribe be taken, yet possibly the Lot may fall upon another Family; the Family is taken; but perhaps his Household may escape; his Household is taken, yet it may be the Lot may light upon some other person; while there is any hope, *Achan* yields not. Thus it is with the Formalist, many things lie betwixt him and the Word; he hath

hath a very thick covering; whereas the prophane person lies more open and naked before the Word. Some of these shifts I shall mention, to which it will be easie to add many more.

1. The Letter of the Law justies him in a great measure, whereas it condemns the profane person: He looks upon the bare letter and shell of the Law, and is ready to say as he *Mat. 23. 20.* *All these things have I observed from my youth:* Thus the Jews, *Rom. 2. 17.* Thou art called a Jew, and *ἰσχυρίζου τὴν νόμον*, retestest in or upon the Law: and *v. 23.* Thou makest thy boast of the Law, (*i.e.*) as being an exact observer of it, and so expecting to be justified by it: So it was with *Paul*, while a Pharisee, *Phil. 3. 6.* as touching the righteousness of the Law, *ἀμωμῆτος*, blameless, without fault, no just charge or complaint could be brought against him, *1 Tim. 1. 9, 10, 11.* The Law is not made for (the condemnation of) the Righteous, but for the Lawless and Disobedient; for the Ungodly, and Sinners; for unholy, and Profane; for Murderers of Fathers, and Murderers of Mothers; for Man-slayers, &c. The Formalist assumes, But I am no such person, and there-

therefore concludes, that the Law condemns him not. 'Tis true, in *Theſis*, men will eaſily acknowledg that the Law is comprehensive, that more is included in it then is expreſſed; But bring it down *ad Hypotheſin*, to their particular caſes and ſins, and then they will ſcarce acknowledg any thing a Duty but what is expreſſy commanded; or a Sin, but what is expreſſy forbidden. The Jews had a Proverbial Speech, That upon every apex or tittle of Scripture did hang a mountain of ſenſe; yet in point of practice, or conviction, or confeſſion of ſin, little or nothing is owned as a duty or ſin, but what hath the expreſs injunction or inhibition of the Word: See it in the example of the ſelf-juſtifying Phariſee, *Luke 18. 11*. He mentions no ſins but ſuch as the very letter of the Law condemns; Extortioners Unjuſt, Adulterers, &c. as if, becauſe he was none of thoſe groſſer ſinners, therefore he was no ſinner at all. 'Tis evident alſo by that narrow gloſs which the Jewish Rabbies had put upon ſeveral of the Commandments, refuted by our Saviour, *Matth. 5. 21*. And thus it is with a formal Profeſſor of the Goſpel; and becauſe he
finds

finds not himself guilty of those grosser sins condemned by the letter of the Law, and light of Nature, he declines the convincing, humbling power of the Word, and shrowds himself from it under this shelter, whereas the Profane Person, the Common Drunkard, Adulterer, Swearer, &c. lies naked before the very letter of the Law, and every blow is upon the bare.

2. As the Letter of the Law, so natural Conscience acquits him, and speaks peace to him. 'Tis dim-sighted, and, till illightned by the Spirit of God, takes no notice of moles, smaller sins: and withal it is (while natural) corrupt and partial; justifying, when it should condemn. 'Tis like an ignorant and unjust Judg, who either, through blindness cannot, or bribery will not, take cognizance of the Malefactors crime. Now this is requisite in order to conviction of sin, that Conscience see and own, and charge it upon the sinner. 'Tis not all the witness from without, that will convince a man, till Conscience do *συμμαρτυρεῖν*, join its Testimony, and charge the crime home upon the man. Conscience, whether its Testimony be true, or

or false, is *Murus Abacensis*, a Brazen-wall to fence off Conviction : What will a man care though all the World accuse him, while Conscience acquits him? And thus it is with a Formalist, his Conscience is an easie Judg, like that Steward, *Luk.* 16. 6. willing to take up with duty to the halves, Fifty for an hundred; and not finding him guilty of grosser sins, passeth a sentence of Absolution upon him; and being thus fortified, he can easily outface the word of Ministers, and withstand all attempts made upon him for his Conviction. Now with gross sinners it is otherwise; even natural Conscience bears witness against him; even Heathen's Consciences accuse for sins against the light of Nature, and those impressions of the Law of God which remain upon their hearts: See *Rom.* 2. 14, 15. Natural Conscience takes little notice of Habits, but when they break out into gross Acts, as Murder, Adultery, &c. here, it cannot be altogether silent. Most profane Sinners are (as 'tis said of a convinced Heretick, *Tir.* 3. 11.) *ἀποκαταβετοί*, self-condemned persons, and therefore it is ordinarily much more easie to convince them of a sin, when we have the advantage

tage of a witness in their bosoms to join with us : 'Tis the proper office of Conscience to witness with, or against a man, to acquit, or condemn him (in subordination to God's Word :) But having in a great measure, lost both its knowledge and honesty (the two essential requisites in a Judge) by the fall, it will not accuse, except the crime be palpable and undeniable, unless the sin carry a dreadful aspect, and have disobedience written in the very forehead of it ; Till the beams of the Sun of Righteousness be darted in, the Formalist's motives lie undiscovered, and his blind and partial Conscience gives an absolving Verdict.

3. Another shroud or shelter, under which the Formalist lurks, and by which he declines the convincing power of the Word, is the secrecy of his sins : He thinks he dances in a Net, and acts unseen. So that though the Arrow of the Word be directed to his Breast and hits his sin, yet he persuades himself it was not intended ; though Conscience sometimes owns the sin, being struck at by the Word, and begins to charge it upon him, yet he soon stops its mouth, by persuading himself, that the Minister did but accidentally

accidentally light upon it, that it was intended against some other person: whereas the prophane person, being conscious of the notoriousness of his sins, and that they are such as are obvious to the worlds eye, he is ready to think that every word is directed to him; and therefore more apt to apply it. The Formalist, though conscious of a sin reproved, yet is ready to think, who imagines that I am guilty of such a sin? I pass for a godly man, a sincere Chrittian, in the opinion of good men; my Minister, I know, judges better, and hath other thoughts of me; and thus he waves the Charge. A stout Thief will stand upon his own justification, and outface the Judg, when he knows the Act was so secret that there can be no Testimony produced; thus it is with a Formalist, whose sins for the most part, are Chamber-sins, Closet-sins, such as are out of mens cognizance. The notoriousness of a sin, is many times a help to conviction. It's an easier matter to make a Malefactor own, and confess that crime, whereof he knows an hundred Witnesses may be produced, then of that which he presumes is known to none but himself. I may use

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that (at least ellusively) to this purpose, 1 Cor. 14. 24. *If one come in that believeth not, or is unlearned, he is convinc'd of all, he is judg'd of all*: So the notoriously prophane person, when his drunkenness, uncleanness, swearing, &c. are spoke to, he is ready to think, this is intended against me, and that every one in the Congregation, will interpret it as spoken to him; and though it is true, that sometimes this heightens his hatred against the Word and Minister, yet if God set in with it, it hath a contrary operation, *v. z.* to edge the Word, and facilitate conviction.

4. (VVhich is of affinity to all the other) The smallness of his sin, is another shelter; they are not aggravated by those bloody and heighning circumstances, as the sins of others. He baptizeth them with the name of slips, infirmities, sins of dayly incurſion, unavoidable weaknesſes, ſpots of God's own Children, ſuch as are incident and common to the beſt of men; nothing befalls him, in this, but what is ordinary; yea, he compares his ſins with thoſe of the godly, recorded in Scripture; *Abraham's Lying; Noah's Drunkenneſs; Lot's Inceſt; David's Murder*

Murther and Adultery; *Peter's Denying* and Forswearing his Master, &c. And finding his sins to fall very much short, in point of guilt and scandal, he not only concludes his condition good and safe, but applauds himself as a Christian of a high form, and great attainments. Now while a man judges thus of himself, it is impossible to fasten any humbling conviction upon him. 'Tis necessary, in order to conviction, that a man not only see sin, but see its sinfulness, hainousness, and aggravated by its circumstances, till a man say, as *David*, *Psalms 25. 11. Pardon my sin, for it is great*; till with *Paul*, he apprehend it, *καὶ δὲ ὁμολογῶ ἀμαρτωλός*, *Rom. 7. 13. Out of measure sinful*; till he look upon himself as the chief of sinners, he will not be to purpose convinced, or humbled. Then will he cry out with *Paul*, *Rom. 7. 14. I am carnal, sold under sin*. 'Tis sin, clothed with exaggerated circumstances of Guilt, Scandal, Rebellion, Atheism, Contempt of God, &c. that awakens the Conscience, and fastens the Dart of conviction in the heart of a sinner. I acknowledg indeed, that the same light is requisite to discover the hainousness of a prophane

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persons sin, and the Arrow must be shot with the same Hand, out of the same Bow, that pricks and pierces his heart, (for we see, that even those grosser sins of drunkenness, adultery, &c. are by many counted venial infirmities, tricks of youth, &c.) yet if we consider the means, whereby God ordinarily works on men, it will appear, that where sins are greater, more palpable, more directly against the express Letter of the word, it is an easier thing to bring the sinner to acknowledgment and conviction; since, in such cases, the Law and Conscience will bear witness against the sinner. That sin, the very act and matter whereof is expressly condemned by the word, is more easily set home upon a man, then when only some circumstance makes it to be a sin: Yet on the other hand, I acknowledg, that the smallest sin, aggravated upon the conscience by the Spirit of God, (whose work it is to convince of sin, *John 16. 8.*) will appear exceeding sinful. *Augustine* robbing an Orchard, when a Youth, was afterwards a sin very hainous in his eyes, when he considered it in its circumstances; and he aggravates it upon himself, by considering that it was against the very

very light of Nature ; that he did it with a full propensity of will ; not for want, but wantonness, having better fruit of his own ; not so much out of love to the Fruit, as out of love to Sin ; that he joyned himself with wicked company , did it at Midnight, having spent the time before in Luxury and Vanity ; that they carried away great Burdens ; when they came home, they had no such desire to eat them, but cast them to the Swine. Upon these and the like considerations, he breaks out into a passionate indignation against himself, and exclamation, to God ; *Behold my heart, O my God, behold my heart, which thou hast pitied in the lowest Hell.* Thus a small sin, seen in Gods light, appears odious and exceeding heinous : Even those, *Motus primo primi*, (as the Schools call them) the suddain and indeliberate suggestions of sin, not coming up to consent, or action, have been matter of strong conviction and deep humiliation to some souls ; yea and have more affected them, then the grossest acts, and greatest exorbitancies : Yet if we look at God's ordinary way of working, which is by the Word and Conscience, it will be easie to conceive, that a Pro-

phane scandalous sinner, is in a nearer capacity of conviction; then he whose sins are but as Motes to the others Beams, as Mole-hills to the others Mountains.

5. The last refuge I shall mention, is the seeming Graces he hath, and the Duties he doth. Many good things are found in him, and proceed from him; these he ballanceth with his sins, and finding his Sins small, his Graces (as he supposes) strong and vigorous, his Performances many and excellent, he concludes well of himself; and under this thick Covering, he shrouds himself from the power of the Word; behind this Bulwark he secures himself from the Gun-shot of Conviction. Thus the Pharisee, *Luke 18. 11, 12. I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, nor even as this Publican:* Here you see he looks upon himself, as free from great enormities; then *v. 12. I Fast twice in the week, I give tythes of all that I possess:* Here's his more then ordinary piety towards God; he is twice a week in a duty of an extraordinary nature; and here's his more then common equity toward man; he payes Tythes of all, even those

those things which the Law had left doubtful. Oh what magnifying and self-applauding thoughts may we imagine him to have ! How hardly could a man have fastned any humbling, convincing word upon him ? Thus it is with the Formalist, he looks upon his Zeal, Meekness, Love to God, and other like Graces ; (for so they appear to him, though indeed but common at best) then considers his Piety towards God, in his constancy in ordinary, and frequency in extraordinary Duties ; his Equity and Mercy towards man ; his Sobriety towards himself ; and finding himself, Rich, *Rev. 3. 17.* and Full, and encreased with Goods, he thinks highly of himself, and admires himself, as much above the pitch of ordinary Christians. Now being thus lifted up, it's no easie matter to bring him down ; charge him with any sin, he will weigh it down with many good duties : His course and the tenour of his life is for God and Holiness, and those sins are but such slips as the best are guilty of, in their journeying towards the heavenly *Canaan*. Now with the Prophane person 'tis otherwise, he hath no such *Asylum* ; you take him Naked, and so the

Dart will more easily hit, and pierce deeper. Thus you see the Formalist hath more Evasions, Refuges, Fortifications against conviction, then the Prophane, and consequently more difficult to convince him.

Reason 2. As it is harder to convince him of sin, so to beat him out of Self, which yet must be done, or else a man is no true Convett: Self-denyal, is the first Lesson we are taught in Christ's School; 'tis the A, B, C, of Christian Religion, and especially in point of justification, to disclaim our own Righteousness, and cast our selves, venture our hopes upon Christ and his Righteousness, is the very *apostolical* of a Christian; and that which gives him, both the Name and thing. This is *Paul's* frame, *Phil.* 3. 7, 11. he quits all for Christ. Now its no easie matter to bring a man to this; but especially the Formalist is hardly perswaded to it. He that thinks he hath something, yea enough of his own, will not easily be perswaded to go a Begging to anothers Door. Man is a proud creature, and loath to be beholdling to any, till meer necessity force him: A Prodigal that hath wasted his Patrimony,

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and rioted away his estate, yet would fain appear as good a Man as his Father, and maintain the Garb and Custom of his Ancestors; while he hath any thing left, he will not let his povertie appear: Thus we; Our first Parents had a Stock of Righteousness, though they prodigally spent it, and beggard themselves and all their posterity; yet we are loath to go a begging, till necessity wear out shame, and whip us out of our pride. Now the Formalist conceits, he hath a stock within himself to live upon; he can spin a VVeb out of his own Bowels to cover himself withal; and if he have but a Rag of his own, he values it above Silks of anothers giving; Home-spun cloath is better then the costliest cloath of Gold or Silver, of anothers providing. This is the great Impediment to a Formalist's conversion; how hard is it to perswade him, that his seeming something, is really nothing! 'Tis not the Precellency of Christs Righteousness to ours, but a sense of our absolute need of his Righteousness, that drives to Christ. There is a more direct opposition betwixt Self and Christ, then betwixt sin and Christ; for sin doth (at least accidentally) drive us

unto Christ, but Self doth altogether draw us from Christ, *Rom. 10. 3. Going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted to the righteousness of God*: Setting up Self, is the pulling down of Christ. He is nothing to that man, that is any thing to himself; flesh and blood taught not *Paul* that Lesson, *Phil. 3. 7, — 11.* As many Prayers, Fasting, Alms-deeds, good VVorks, or seeming Graces, as the Formalist hath, so many Bulwarks against conviction, and Arguments to dissuade him from a close with Christ. Now the Prophane person is an absolute Bankrupt, an arrant Beggar, one that hath not so much as Husks of Duty (that I may allude to it) to fill his Belly, or satisfy his conscience. He will be ready to cry out with the Publican, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner, Luke 18. 13.* while the Formalist (Pharisee-like) is at his, *God I thank thee, &c. I fast, I pay Tythes. I, and I still*; Self is magnified in all. Now is it not easier to persuade a Beggar to ask an Alms, then one that is Rich, increased with goods, and needs nothing? He that is stark naked, will sooner be persuaded to put on cloaths of anothers Free-gift, then he that is

is cloathed, and warm to his own apprehension.

Reason 3. As the Formalist is more hardly beaten out of self, so he is more difficultly perswaded of his unregenerate estate, then the profane Person. He that thinks his estate good enough already, will not easily be perswaded to change it : It's one step to Conversion, to see our selves unconverted ; to Happiness, to see our selves miserable. 'Tis *Seneca's* expression, *Ideo mutari nolumus quia nos optimos esse credimus* ; The great reason of our persisting in our present condition, is, because we conceit it good and happy. This conceit damps all. While men think their Prison a Palace, they will not come out of it. Hereticks are confidently perswaded they are in the right, and therefore their ears are stopt against means of reducement. True, the profanest think thus of themselves, but they have no ground, and therefore are sooner beaten out of this hold ; but the Formalist hath much to say for himself, can produce many evidences, whereby he deceives himself and others. What Graces are peculiar to a Christian which he hath not in appearance, and in his own apprehension.

Apprehension ? He loves God, Christ, the Word, Ordinances, the Brethren, yea, his Enemies; he hath Faith, Patience, Zeal, &c. yea, he can remember the time when it was otherwise with him; he experienceth a real change in himself; he hates where he loved, and loves where he hated. Now here is a double work to do; we must first raze those false foundations, walls as high as Heaven, confute his reasonings and arguments, which he produceth to prove his Conversion, before we can fasten any thing upon him to draw him to Christ; and how hardly this will be done, is easie to imagine: Will a man be easily perswaded to pull all down, and begin upon a new Foundation, when he hath brought it to the finishing? Will one that is at his journeys end, be drawn to begin it again? Can you prevail with a man that thinks himself at Heavens door, to return again by the gates of Hell? He that feels himself well, and is, to his own apprehension, strong and healthful, finds a universal Eucrasie; head and stomach, and each other part in its due temperament, will be hardly perswaded that a mortal disease hath seised upon him, or to take
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Physick as one lying at the point of death. Men are not easily perswaded out of an opinion of the goodness of their condition, when they seem to have taken it upon warrantable grounds.

Prona venit cupidis in sua vota fides.

Men are easily perswaded to believe that which they would have to be, and as hardly dissuaded from believing it. Now a profane person hath no such evidences to produce: To convince him of his unregenerate condition, we need go no further but to his life and actions, the very tenour whereof speaks him wicked: But to convince the Formalist, it is necessary to dive into his heart, to discover his principles, ends, and intentions; and this is no easie matter; the heart is so full of windings, that neither we, nor himself can discover it: It is a grand cheat, 'twil pretend fair for God, Christ, and Holiness: *David* suspects his own heart, and therefore puts it under God's search, *Psal.* 139. 21—*end.* Thus we have discovered some of those inward impediments which render the Conversion of a Formalist more difficult, then of a Profane person: We come now to those *Ab extra*; such hinderances as are without

without him, from others; and these shall reduce to two heads, (omitting others) viz. either 1. From Ministers, or, 2. From People, especially the Godly.

Sect. 2. Outward Impediments of the word's effect upon the Formalist, viz. such as proceed from others.

Reason, 1. Something may be found in Ministers, which renders the Conversion of a Formalist very difficult, viz. Their want of skill and industry this way; God having appointed them as Instruments in this work, and the effect being more hardly, or easily producible, not only according to the skill of the Principal Agent, but the aptitude or ineptitude of the Instrument he useth; Hence it follows, that the work miscarries, through their ill-management of it. 'Tis true, in reference to God's absolute Power, it matters not what the Instrument be; Clay and Spittle shall open blind eyes; The blowing of Ram's-horns shall be more prevalent then Iron-rams, to dismantle a City; A Playster of Figs shall cure a Boyl, or Plague-sore, if God please: Nor is it less true, that the word is in its kind, a powerful weapon

to batter Fortifications, to level towering
 Imaginations, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. That it is
 sharper then a Two-edged sword, pier-
 cing to the dividing asunder of Soul and
 Spirit. *aperte inuenerunt & erunt res*
aperte: a critical Judge of the hearts,
 thoughts, intentions, Heb. 4. 12. But
 yet it cuts according as it is managed and
 weilded; A *Scanderbeg's* arm can do
 wonders with an ordinary Sword;
 (though I would be loth to ascribe so
 much to the Ministers skill and industry
 as that instance may intimate, nor is it
 always according to a Ministers ability or
 conscientiousness:) yet where there is
 a manifest defect of parts or piety, skill
 or industry, the work is less successfull.
 Now in nothing are the generality of
 God's Messengers more deficient, then in
 this Divine skill, to unfold the mysteri-
 ous Labyrinths of the heart of man; to
 uncase an Hypocrite, anatomize a For-
 malist, to get within men, and discover
 those Depths of Satan that are in their
 hearts: This, though the highest Learn-
 ing, and most necessary for a Minister,
 is least studied: The Eagle-ey'd School-
 men were but Bats and Owles in this kind
 of Learning: We alas! are more apt to
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Spend our time and pains in high Speculations, curious Disquisitions, questions more tending to strife, then the edification of the hearer, then in this necessary, very necessary study of unmasking the Formalist, and cutting the Thred between the Hypocrite and the sincere Christian. It was Mr. *Dod's* expression, that most Ministers of *England* shot over the heads of their Auditors, sure I am, too many shoot short of their hearts. This proceeds partly from our unacquaintance with our own hearts, partly from our not studying the spirituality of Religion: Alas do we not draw men out of Profaneness into Formality, and there leave them? If we bring them up to a Form of Prayer, Hearing, Family-performances, do we not think the work done? We are too like some curious Carvers and Painters, that carve the Image, draw the Lineaments, and lay the Colours of Christianity upon them, but do not labour to beget in them the life of Christians. We do not tell them *Mark 10. 21. One thing is yet lacking*: that power must be added to the former, as the Soul to the Body. Oh that it might not be justly charged upon us,

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that we are content to see the image of Christianity drawn upon our people! Besides, it may partly proceed from hence, that the greatest part of our Congregations consisting of prophane ones, we bend our Studies and Discourses mainly against them, and by delivering things too generally, and indistinctly, we strengthen the bands of the Formalist and Hypocrite. Add to all this, (which is, and ought to be for a lamentation) we lead our people no higher than a form by our example: 'Tis our too much formality in our lives, that teaches it our people; if they saw more of the power of godliness in us, our preaching would have more power to beget real godliness in them.

Reason 2. Something lies upon the generallity of Christians, especially the godly, which renders the conversion of a Formalist very difficult.

As 1. The godly, not being able to discern them, (or if they discern them, having no warrant to separate from them) do give them the right hand of fellowship, admit them into their most intimate Society, lay them in their Bosoms, and they are reputed amongst the best
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of Christians. This mightily confirms them in their good opinion of themselves, and becomes an occasion of hardning them against conviction. They abuse this indulgence of the godly into their own obduration, and to the heightning of their security. I speak not this, as blaming the godly for admitting them (for Tares, though not Briars and Thorns, must grow amongst the Wheat till Harvest) but to shew, what bad use the hypocrite makes of the good esteem he hath with the godly: Though perhaps, sincere Christians may justly deserve to be blamed, for want of plain dealing with such, whom they have just cause to suspect of formality, or hypocrisie. Well, this, (as I said) hardens the Formalist in his self-conceit, and sets him at a further distance to conversion. Under this shelter *Judas* lay secure, and presumed that his condition was as good as the rest of the Apostles. A Formalist carries so smoothly, that the truly godly, (who are alwaies self-suspicious) are more apt to suspect themselves, then those with whom they converse. Now the godly (on the other hand) are shie of the company of prophane persons, knowing they have
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expres commands, to avoid unnecessary converse with such, as, 1 Cor. 5. 11. 2 Cor. 6. 17. and this sometimes, (through God's setting it upon their hearts) becomes an occasion of putting them upon a more serious consideration of their condition; even, a Cain fears and abhors the thought of being an Outcast; those Censures of Suspension and Excommunication, appointed by God himself, work by way of shame and disgrace. But,

3. There is so little liveliness in the best of Christians, that the Formalist concludes himself as good as the best, and so rests in his present condition. Where there is something of the power of godliness, yet there is too much of meer form; and this encourages others to rest altogether in a form. VVhere there is some life, there is too little liveliness; the best do not to the life hold forth the word of life, Col. 2. 16. There is something in the lives of Christians, to convince and condemn the Prophane; they see their swearing, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, &c. condemned in the practise of Christians, shunning and abhorring those sins; but they do not so live, as to con-

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denn the Formality of those amongst them: There is not that warmth in their discourses and duties, that vigour in their affections and actions, that may quicken and heat others. Men are apt to make a stand at others deadness, as the people did at the dead body of *Amasa*, 2 *Sam.* 20. 12.

'Tis storied of *Janias*, before his Conversion, that meeting once with a Country-man, as he was in a journey, and falling into discourse with him about divers points in Religion, he observed the plain Fellow, to talk so experimentally, with so much heartiness and affection, as made him first begin to think, that there was something more in those Truths, then his Notional-humane Learning had yet discovered; which occasioned his more serious inquiry into them; and afterward his Conversion. Liveliness, and affectionateness in Christians, is a singular Spur to incite others; but alas! how rare is it? This wanting in the best, doth strengthen the hands of the Formalist, and beget in him a conceit, that he is as good as the best. Thus we have laid down some of those impediments, (both in himself, and from others) which lye
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in the way of a Formalist's Conversion, and render it more difficult, then of the Prophane.

CHAP. IV.

Misapplication prevented.

BEfore I come to Application, it will be requisite to say something for the preventing of misapplication. Some may possibly hence draw this Conclusion, That the next way to conversion, is to turn Prophane; that to lay aside Prayer, Hearing, &c. and to become a Swearer, Adulterer, &c. is the best way to become a Saint; an inference much like that, Rom. 3. 8. *Let us do evil that good may come*; and Rom. 6. 1. *Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound.* But let such peryerie Disputers know,

1. Though the word hath many times, an easier influence upon the Prophane, then the Formalist; yet this makes nothing for the comfort of Prophane persons, so continuing, though many such are converted and saved; What is this to him that lives and dies unconverted? 'Tis as if one sick of a Fever, refusing

the Physician's help, feeding and nourishing his Disease, should comfort himself in this, That his condition is better then one that is sick of the Plague, because many are by Physick cured of the one, few or none of the other; when the one as well as the other, is Mortal without the Physician's help. Though many Prophane Wretches are saved upon their Faith and Repentance, what comfort is to thee that continuest Prophane, without Faith or Repentance? If *Zacharias* the Publican, *Magdalen* the Harlot, *Paul* the Persecutor, are converted and saved, canst thou, who art an impenitent Oppressor, Harlot, Persecutor, &c. promise Salvation to thy self? They are saved, not because they were such, but because they Repent.

2. Though prophane persons are more frequently converted, then Formalists, yet prophaneness is no cause of their Conversion. If you suppose so, you admit a Falacy, *Non causa, pro causa*; assigning that the cause, which indeed is not. Many, being Prophane, are converted, but not because they are Prophane; they are converted from, not for their Prophaneness. At most, it hath but an accidental causality,

causality; as an enemy intending to kill you, may accidentally let out the corruption, and so intending to be your Murderer, may unwittingly, and contrary to his intention, prove your Physician; But that Prophaneness can have no proper causative influence into your conversion, will thus appear: If so, it must be supposed, either, 1. To move God to call you; or, 2. To dispose, and incline you to conversion: but to imagine either of these, is very foolish and irrational.

For the first, you must know, That nothing out of God himself can be an inducement to him, to call, or convert any; God's Eternal Decree, which is the proper Efflux of his own Will, and of his Free-Grace, is his onely Motive in this; See *Rom.* 8. 29, 30. *Ephes.* 1. 3, 4, 5, 6, 11. *2 Tim.* 1. 9. 'Tis not the good works of any fore-seen, that move God to call them, (they being effects, not causes of conversion) much less then their evil works: what can be more absur'd, then to suppose that that which God loaths, should induce him to love us?

And for the second, 'tis equally absurd;

fur'd; for how can that which is in the nature of it, an aversion from God, produce, as an effect, conversion to God? As rationally may we imagine darkness to be the cause of light, sickness of health, death of life, as that sin can any way be a cause of, or dispose unto conversion. Could Prophaneness dispose a man to Conversion, then it would follow, the more Prophane, the nearer to conversion; which is all one, as to say, the nearer Hell, the nearer Heaven.

3. Neither is it the good that Formalists do, but their hypocrisie in doing, and the bad use they make of their good actions, that renders their Conversion difficult. Here also you admit the same salary, if you suppose their praying, hearing, &c. to obstruct their Conversion. These duties rightly performed, are both means and evidences of Conversion, and incumbent upon the converted. Hearing is the way to have Faith (and other Graces) begotten in us, *Rom. 10. 17*. Prayer is prescrib'd to *Simon Magus*, yet being in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, in order to his Conversion, *Acts 8. 22*. So we may say of other-like duties: As Prophaneness is

not dispositive to Conversion, so neither are Pious duties any hinderance, but furtherance to it. Nay more, if ever you be Converted, you must do what they do, though not as they do. You must pray, hear, meditate, &c. though not in a form, as they do, but with power; not relying upon them when done, but denying them, putting no confidence in them. 'Tis not the form of godliness that hinders Conversion, but because it is but a form, and yet rested in.

4. I may add, (though it's not so much to the business in hand) though Formalists hurt themselves, yet they may be, and often are useful and beneficial to others; whereas the Profane person is offensive, or unprofitable to all: they may teach others, though not themselves. Profaneness, gives occasion of stumbling and offence to them without; the Formalist's life carries some conformity to the Rule, (and is so far imitable) though his heart be naught and hypocritical; his practises are good, though his principles and ends be naught: Others may see what they ought to do in him; but the Profane person, as his heart is naught, so his life is irregular, not to be

Imitated. The formal persons praying, hearing, &c. may possibly excite others to do that in sincerity, which they do in hypocrisie, their parts and performances may be useful to others, though accidentally hurtful to themselves. So that there's no Reason to draw such an inference from the Doctrine in hand, or to suppose prophaneness the nearest cut to conversion. If any will yet abuse this Truth to their own obduration in wicked and debauched courses, yet I hope what I have said by way of prevention, will sufficiently acquit me from the guilt of the blood of such Souls: now for Application,

CHAP. V.

The first Use of the Point, in several Inferences, for Information, or Instruction.

THE first Use may inform, or teach us several good Lessons.

I. An outward conformity to the Rule of the word, is not conversion; 'tis more then cleansing the life from gross and palpable miscarriages, or washing the

the outside of the Cup or Platter; if this were all, the Formalist would not only go into the Kingdom of heaven before the prophane person; but would be there already. If prayer, hearing, fasting, talking religiously, were all, who would be saved sooner then the Formalist? Then might we say of such, as the Jews of the Scribes and Pharisees, if but two go to heaven, the one of them should be a Formallist. Press him to reading, hearing, prayer, &c. He will be ready to reply (and in some sense truly) *All these things have I done from my youth: what lack I yet?* He can say with the Pharisee, Luke 18. 11, 12. *I thank God that I am not as other men are;* and with Paul, Phil. 3. 6. *As touching the Righteousness which is in the Law, blameless:* his life is not spotted with any notorious, scandalous sin; his Conscience accuseth him of nothing, but that which is incident to the best; in a word, take him, as to his outside, his life, his frequency in duty, &c. you may rank him with those of the highest form; yet this man may be possibly at a further distance to Christ, his conversion more hopeless, his heart more obdurate then the vilest drunkard,

drunkard, swearer, &c. One thing, yet many things are lacking, especially these three, which are essential to a Christian.

1. He wants a thoroughly humbling sight of sin, especially of the sin of his nature and of his heart; he sees not that Atheism, pride, unbelief, hypocrisie, &c. which lodg in his bosom: this is a main thing in order to conversion. *Paul* had all above-mentioned while a Pharisee, but till the law revived and he died, *Rom. 7. 9.* till he saw himself carnal sold under sin, he remained unconverted. The formalist is ready to say with that proud Monk, *Isidore*, *non habeo domine quod mihi ignoscas*, I have nothing that needs a pardon; but if ever the true work be begun he must change his note, and cry out with *David*, *Pf. 25. 11. Pardon my sin, for it is great*, and with the *Publican*, *Luke 18. 13. God be merciful to me a sinner*. There is no conversion without some conviction, none were ever saved (in Gods ordinary way of working) but they have seen themselves lost. There will be some sense of sin, and solicitousness about the pardon of it, in all those that are truly converted.

1. He wants self-denial, to wit, a total and absolute disclaim of his own righteousness, abnegation of self is necessary, prerequisite to acceptance of Christ; this is more then whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. He can do duties, but cannot deny them; he cannot with *Paul*, count all loss and dung for Christ, &c. *Pb. I. 37. 10.* He doth, and expects for doing; looks for heaven not as a gift of grace, or the purchase of Christs blood, but as wages for working. He is much of the temper of those two Monks, or Popish Priests, the one whereof proudly challenges God, *Redde mihi vitam eternam quam debes.* Pay me eternal life, which thou owest me; the other as scornfully refuseth heaven as a gift, *Cælum gratis non accipiam,* I will not take heaven on free-cost; now hence, all becomes odious to God that such a one doth: his duties no more acceptable then killing a man, cutting off a dogs neck, offering Swines blood, or blessing an Idol, *II. 56. 3.* He is but (*Ephraim-like, Hos 10. 1*) *An empty Vine bringing forth fruit unto himself.* Self is that great Idol, which (like *Beli* in the *Apocryphal* story) devours all, self is prayed to, self is praised, self is the

the principle and end, the *Alpha & Omega* of all this speaks him short of true conversion.

3. He wants sincerity (which is Evangelical perfection) in all he doth: that which he doth, is good, but he doth it not well. The Scripture distinguishes betwixt doing that which is right in the sight of the Lord, and doing it with a perfect heart, *Asa's* heart was perfect all his days, *2 Chron.* 15. 17. And he did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. Chap. 14. 2. not so *Amaziah*, Chap. 25. 2. He did that which was right—but not with a perfect heart: God looks at the principle, manner, and end of our actions, as well as the matter; here the Formalist is deficient: *non factum sed modus in culpa* the matter is good, but the manner is culpable. God may say to such as the Jews of old, *Psal.* 50. 8. *I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings to have been continually before me; I will not blame thee for neglect of, but want of sincerity in duty: God will draw up a charge against them, like that Zech. 7. 5, 6, When ye fasted and mourned, did ye at all fast unto me,*

even

even to me? And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for your selves, and drink for your selves? They failed, you see, in the end of their duties: Self, and not God, was their End; and this is a great piece of insincerity. Conversion, if right, not onely rectifies a mans actions, but chiefly his Principles and Ends; so that the Formalist, in this, appears to be short of true Conversion.

2. A second Lesson we may hence learn, is this, viz. The Reason, or at least a reason why Conversion is so rare in these last days: Men are got up to a Form, and there they stick: It was long since foretold, that Formality should be a sin of the Last days, 2 Tim. 3. 5. There are few but they have got some knowledg, and do something in a Form, and they think this enough, and all. Some Diseases are called *Opprobria Medicorum*, the shame or reproach of Physicians, because they cannot find out the cause and rule of them. This, if any, is the *Opprobrium Ministrorum*, very hardly discovered, and more hardly cured. Though it cannot be denied, that there is too much Prophaneness in the World; yet even Prophaneness it self is got under this

this shelter: A Form of Godliness is many times found amongst those that are under the Power of open Wickedness. Religion is in breadth, it hath more Professors and Practisers of it in a Form, but loseth in depth and height, never so little sincerity and seriosness in the profession and practice of it. Knowledge and Means abound; Light gets into the Conscience. Men cannot keep their Consciences from being Clamorous, without doing something; loth they are to forgo their sweet, their profitable sins. Hence arise a civil Commotion, (as the Philosopher speaks of the morally wicked, *καὶ οὕτως αὐτῶν ἡ ψυχή*, their Souls are at odds with themselves) light and lust are together by the ears; now to take up the quarrel and comprimize the difference, Satan and their own hearts find out this expedient, to set up a form of Godliness, that under this cloak they may more securely practise the power of ungodliness: they will do something that is good, supposing they may have the better leave to do evil, when men are got to this, they stick at it, and make it their *non ultra*: thus they think to satisfy both Interests, *viz.* of their sins, and

and of their souls. 'Tis true, there are Formalists of different forms and degrees; some more gross and palpable, others that spin a finer thread, and waste more in the dark; but this sin, more or less, is to be found in the generality of professed Christians, and this renders Conversion a very rare and difficult work.

3. This shews us, that (although nothing is common, yet) nothing is more dangerous, to step out of Prophaneness, into Formality: how ordinary is it for notorious sinners, when beaten out of open wickedness, to take Sanctuary in a form of Godliness? What's this, but to run further from God, while we seem to come nearer him? at best but to come out of *Egypt*, and slay in the Wilderness? Such men turn sin (like some thief or lewd Companion) out of the street-door, and then receive it in at a back-door, lodging it in the secret Chamber of their hearts; they retire out of the field of a more open hostility against God and Holiness; but betake themselves into an impregnable Castle, where they set God and Christ at Defiance: under a pretence of Kissing, they do more certainly

certainly kill Christ : shunning Scylla they fall into Charybdis : thinking to deceive God by a shew, they deceive themselves really. For,

1. You, (that I may turn my speech to such) do but more obstruct the way to your own Conversion ; get further out of the reach and power of the Word : the Plague, when it comes outward in a boyl or sore, is less dangerous, then when it strikes inward, and seizeth upon the Brain or Vitals. Formality is but a striking in of that disease, which formerly appeared on the Face and Body, and therefore makes it more incurable.

'Tis sad to think, how many have left the fouler way of Prophaneness, in which they were walking towards Hell, and are now more certainly, and swiftly posting thither, in the cleaner way of Formality. Well, let me tell you, the Diuel thinks none so surely his, as those, who serve him under Christ's Livery. They think themselves Free, and yet are not ; are most likely to continue in Bondage. He is twofold more the Child of Hell, who hath got a Cloak of Religion to cover his Rags and filthiness withal ; and hath got the Art to keep up a practise of duty.

dary, and a course of sin together. This disease is most Mortal oftentimes, that is least felt: Formality only serves to brawn the heart, and Sear the conscience, and then there's but little hope of such a soul's Conversion. He that is become insensible, (and such is the Formalist) is next door to incurable.

2. As you do more effectually shut Heaven's door upon you, so you open a wider door into Hell; (that I may allude to that Scripture, 2 Pet. 1. 11.) A more abundant entrance you have into Satan's Kingdom: your evidences are hereby made clearer, your title surer. Hell is the hypocrite's Fee-simple, *Mark 14. 51.* The nearer Heaven, if you fall short of it, the greater will your fall be, and the heavier your condemnation, 2 Pet. 2. 10, 21. &c. *If you have escaped the pollutions of the world — and are again entangled, (as certainly you will be, if you rest in formality) your later end will be worse than your beginning: better you had never known the way of righteousness, than afterwards to turn from the holy commandment.* A great part of Hell will doubtless be a sad recapitulation of the possibilities, probabilities, advantages, convictions, mo-

tions

tion, which we had, and slighted the more of these here, the more of Hell hereafter. And who then may expect a hotter Hell then your selves? Oh, will it not be a heart-cutting consideration, to think how many steps you had taken, and all in vain, for want of one step further? Yes, to think, that there are many now in glory, who took less pains (as to the matter and frequency of duty) then you didst, who shall yet lye down in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone for ever.

This shews us, that the Pharisee hath no reason to boast, or lift himself in his own conceit, above the prophane wretch that he sees or knows of: To ordinary with such to bless themselves with the Pharisee, *Luke 18. 11.* God, *thinks thee, that I am not as other men are, nor as this Publican.* To stand upon their comparisons, or rather disparisons. *Isaiah 65. 5.* *Stand by thy self, Come not near me, I am holier then thou:* but then a checking word follows, *These are I smoke in my nose, and a fire that burneth in the day:* highly and continually offensive to God. 'Tis a speech much like that of our Saviour to Peter, *Get thee behind me Satan*

Satan, thou art an offender unto me. Poor deluded, self-deluding souls! You think your state incomparably better then your prophane Friend or Neighbour, when, alas, it's worse, in this at least, that you think it better: What difference do you think, will God make betwixt an open Enemy, and a counterfeit Friend: surely, if any, the later is worse. God seems to be palled, and at a non-plus, what to do with such as thou art; Rev. 3. 15. *I would thou wert either hot or cold;* but vers. 16. comes to a peremptory and terrible resolution: *So then, because thou art neither hot nor cold, I will spue thee out of my mouth:* Is this a condition to be proud of? What more loathsome then vomit? Can the vilest wretch on-earth, undergo a heavier doom? Indeed, could not God find thee out, thy case might be more hopeful, but he can, and will unmask and uncase thee: Then thy condition will be so much the worse, by how much better it seemed to thee, *Psal. 125. 5. Such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.* Such are the wayes of the hypocritical Formalist, tortuous and crooked, full of windings,

*In tortuosi
calibus.*

and turnings, like the Hare's doublings before the Dogs; but God will find them out, and lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, i. e. They shall be numbred with the prophane and open Sinners, and fall with them into the same condemnation. Let me then say to thee, as the Penitent Thief to his Fellow, *Luke 23. 40.* *Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?* Why boastest thou against the prophane, when both must lye down together in the same Hell? Yea thou, in the hotter place: The Tares, as well as Briars and Thorns, must be burnt with fire unquenchable, *Matth. 13. 30, 40.* Your boasting therefore is not good.

5. This may intimate a twofold duty incumbent on Ministers, in reference to this sin of Formality.

1. Let us take heed of driving our People out of Prophaneness into Formality, and there leaving them. What skill and prudence is necessary, so to manage our Work, that we, not onely draw upon them the Lineaments, but beget in them the life of Christianity: Lest we be like the unskilful Chyrurgion, to skin the sore, and let it fester inwardly; this is instead
of

of curing, to render them more incurable. Two things will much conduce to a thorow work.

1. Let us be sure to press an inward, as well as outward change; labour we to get into their hearts, and convince them, that the Root of all their Malignity is there, according to that of our Saviour, *Matth. 15. 19.* Let us tell them, and tell them again, *That they must be renewed in the spirit of their minds, Ephes. 4. 23.* That it is not enough to cleanse their hands, except they also purifie their hearts, *1am. 4. 8.* That 'tis not onely the course of their lives, but chiefly and primarily the frame of their hearts that must be changed: while we onely press outward Reformation, and performance of duties, we do but teach them to do as Christians, not to be Christians; 'tis good to begin at the heart, and bring the disease outward.

2. Let us be much in pressing Faith and Obedience to Christ, as well as Repentance and Reformation. Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, were the sum of *Pauls* Doctrine, *Acts 20. 20.* Both must be preached; the former in subordination to

to the latter: *Luther* used to say, he that can well distinguish betwixt Law and Gospel, is a good Divine; I say, he that can join them well together, is the skillful Preacher: we should be very careful that we separate not Faith and Duty, Law and Gospel, or make those opposite, which are subordinate; while we press Repentance, Prayer, Hearing, &c. with little or no mention of Christ, we teach men to be Loyalists; while we preach Christ, Free-Grace, the Saints Privileges, &c. without the Law, we teach men to be Libertines, and Licentious Antinomists: The mean is best; a prudent mixture of Loyal severity, with Gospel sweetness, is the way to make men thorough Christians.

3. The other branch of our duty is this, That we bend our study much against this sin, it being the sin of the age we live in. What charge the King of Syria gave concerning the King of Israel, 1 King. 22. 31. *Fight neither with small nor great, &c.* The same should our care be as to this sin: 'Tis the Devil's last and strongest hold: beat him out here, and we are conquerors. Two things (omitting other) I commend to this purpose.

1. (To make us more able for this work) Let us diligently observe the windings and formality of our own hearts: For as it is, *Proverbs 27.19. As in water, face answereth to face; so the heart of man to man.* (Though I will not be confident that's the sense of that Text) we are all of the same mould: Books may make us able, but this will make us profitable Ministers: The best way to fit our Sermons for others hearts, is to try them upon, or rather to dig them out of our own: What our people do most industriously strive to hide from us, *viz.* the naughtiness of their hearts, we may in despite of them see in our own: (and possibly this may be one reason why the Wisdom of God hath chosen men of like infirmities with others, to be the Preachers of the Word.) Well, my Brethren, let's but shoot home at our own hearts, and it's a thousand to one if we hit not some, yea, many in our Congregations.

2. (To make us more successful in this work) Pray over our studies: Some keep seeds before they put them into the Earth, and water them after: How well might we hope that spiritual seed would thrive,

thrive, that hath Prayer to go before, and follow it: and truly, if ever we have need to pray, it is when we are to grapple with this sin. This formal Devil will scarce out without prayer and fasting; What need have we to beg that the searcher of hearts will direct the arrow of his Word to the heart? The Apostle in *Heb. 4. 12, 13.* speaking of the words discovering power, ties with a strange connexion, the Omniscience of God to it. Surely, if the All-knowing God do not more immediately concur, the Word will not so pierce to the dividing asunder of the Soul and Spirit, joints and marrow, &c. 'Tis fabled of *Pigmalion*, that having made the Pourtraicture of a curious Woman, falling in love with it, he prayed to *Venus*, and she put life into it: Have we drawn the amiable Picture, or caryed the lovely image of a Christian upon any of our people? O let's beg down life into them from God.

6. Once more: We may hence learn, that God looks not at worthiness or unworthiness, at preparatory dispositions, previous qualifications, or that Popish fiction of merit of congruity in those whom he calls: (I desire here to be

be understood of what we may imagine to dispose a man, or put him in a nearer capacity to conversion; otherwise there is no such thing as fitness or unfitness really, as to Gods Omnipotency) should God judg as man judgeth, or look upon the outward appearance, as man looketh, Whom should he sooner call then the Formalist? were we to guess according to carnal Reason, whom the Lord would chuse, would we not say of the Formalist, as *Samuel* of *Jesses* eldest son; 1 Sam. 16. surely the Lords annointed is before him? these seem to meet God half way, and not to be far from the Kingdom of God. Who would take (as was before hinted) the knottiest, crookedst timber to lay in his building? the roughest stones to make his wall? yet so it pleases God to do: God looks with other eyes then we do. *Mat* 9. 12, 13. Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. God delights to make all his works Creations, and to build where there is no appearance of foundation; and this to exclude mans boasting. He will have his grace to be, and to appear free. But to proceed to a second Use.

CHAP. VI.

*The second and third Use of the Point,
Viz. Terror to the Formalist, and dis-
coveries of such.*

Use 2. **T**He second Use may serve to pull down the pride and haughtiness of the self-conceited Formalist, and to strike terror into his heart: This Text and Doctrine may be like the fingers and hand-writing to *Belsazzar*, *Dan. 5. 5.* And passeth the same sentence upon him as that did, Thou art weighed in the ballance, and found wanting. How doth the Formalist bless himself in comparison of the prophane? He would not for a world be as they are; when alas, he is worse. If I may say of the unconverted, That one is further from conversion than another, (as that Text seems to intimate, *Mark 12. 34.* Thou art not far, &c.) then these surely are at the farthest distance. That fore-cited Text, *Mat. 9. 12. 13.* Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, seems to hint, that such self-conceitedly righteous persons, are out of

the care and call of Christ, and that's
 said. But I cannot expect that any
 should take home this Terror, till it be
 charged home upon them; till Conscience
 say, Thou art the man: we are apt
 to catch at comforts, and decline terrors;
 it will be necessary therefore, to give
 some Signes and Characters of the For-
 malist (though something hath been
 already hinted) that so being convinced,
 he may apply it.

This may (if you please) be a distinct Use 3.
 Use of Examination. To give you there-
 fore some Notes of such:

1. He whose duties and personal righte-
 ousness stand in opposition, not in sub-
 ordination to Christ and his righteous-
 ness, is the person we speak of: possi-
 bly his Baptism and Education make him
 affect the name of Christian; but he
 sees not the absolute necessity of Christs
 righteousness to justify and save him;
 supposing he hath enough in his own
 store. Had this man heard Christ speak-
 ing of his sufferings in order to mans
 salvation, he would have been ready
 with *Peter*, to say, as *Mat. 16. 22.* Ma-
 ster spare thy self; or as *Judas* con-
 cerning the precious ointment, To what
 end

end is all this waste? He may be a professed enemy to Popery, yet hath in him this Popish principle that he can keep the Commandments, and it may be supererogate also. Such a one deals with Christ, as those women the Prophet speaks of, *Isa. 4. 1.* We will (say they) eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, onely let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach; So they will be cloathed with their own Righteousness; onely they love the name Christian, because its a name of honour. How is it then? the more strict and holy thou seemest to thy self, doth Christ seem of less necessity to thee? do thy duties set thee further off, or bring thee nearer Christ? dost thou live more within, and upon thy self? surely if so, to thee this terror belongs; 'Tis quite contrary with the sincere Christian, his duties and performances drive him nearer Christ: see *Phil. 3. 3.—10.* though he grow in inherent holiness, yet he grows daily more apprehensive of the necessity of imputed righteousness, because he sees more of Gods holiness, the laws purity and strictness, and the impurity and filchiness of his own heart: when

he

he hath done all, he cries out, *Unprofitable Servant* 1 and woe to me, for my Duties, Prayers, Hearings, Graces, &c. If I had not a Mediator. When he rises highest in Duty or gracious actings, yet his suit to Christ (as *Ruth's* to Boaz, *Ruth* 3. 9.) is, *Spread thy skirt over me.* 'Tis remarkable, *Phil.* 3. 3. *For we are the Circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

2. (Which is the root of the former) He whose Duties and Holiness are the fuel of Pride, is the man we enquire after; Thus it was with the Pharisees, *Isa.* 65. 5. *Luke* 18. 11, 12. *John* 7. 48. Formality comes off ordinarily more proud from a Duty, and goes on the next time more self-confident (except perhaps God hath notably cut him short, as to the exercise of his gifts:). True, pride may rush (as one saith) into the heart of a sincere Christian; but it rests, grows, is cherished in the heart of a Hypocrite: where Pride leads on in any Duty, yet Humility brings him off: what the sincere person wants in antecedent directing humility, he makes up in subsequent and correcting humility, *2 Chron.* 32. 26.

Hezekiah

*Dike on
the Hearts
Deceitful-
ness.*

Hecce *Hab* was humbled for the pride of his heart : a true Christian is humbled for his Pride, an Hypocrite is proud of his Humility : There's a Monitor within the sincere Christians heart, that's often jogging him, and brings him down when he begins to swell. Try then, is the worm of pride bred and nourished by thy duties? Doest thou pray, and hear, and discourse thy self more proud, haughty, self-conceited? 'Tis a sad symptom thou art yet but a Formalist : 'Tis storied, that the Isle of *Man* (the Title being doubted whether it belonged to *Britain* or *Ireland*) was adjudged to *Britain*, because it foster'd venomous Serpents brought from thence into it; Sure I am, if thy duties foster and cherish the venomous Serpent of Pride, they are the duties of a Formalist, not a sincere Christian.

Hydra.

3. He that is altogether a stranger to Godly sorrow, Humiliation for sin, (and this is the cause of both the former) he that never knew what compunction or contrition meant, whose heart was never broken up, and furrowed with the Plow of conviction; who hath had but a superficial work, hath but cleansed the outside

outside of the Cup or Platter? This ob-
 servable, The stony ground received the
 word (*ἡ σκληρὰ πέτρα*) Matth. 13. 20.
 immediately with joy, but soon withered;
 whereof the Evangelist Matthew, Chap.
 13. 5. gives the reason, because it had not
 depth of Earth: Luke, Chap. 8. 6. because
 it had not moisture: Both the Evangelists,
 as also Mark Chap. 4. 16. tells us, They
 received the Word with joy and glad-
 ness: What can be understood by depth
 of earth, and moisture, but hearings
 and meltings by Humiliation? This the
 stony ground wanted; and therefore they
 being yet a rock not broken, not hum-
 iled, the seed though suddenly springing
 up, withers, and comes to nothing:
 heat and moisture are joint-causes of
 growth and fruitfulness; the latter with-
 out the former drowns and suffocates the
 seed; the former without the latter doth
 scorch and wither it: and this is the case
 of this ground, they have some heat of
 joy and raptures, which (like the flar-
 tering rays of the April Sun) draw forth
 some early blossoms, but when some cold
 chilling frosts, or scorching heats come
 in the following Month, they are either
 nipt by the one, or scorched and shrunk
 up

up by the other : Præmature fruits never come to maturity : The Child that thrusts its self forth into the world before its time, seldom proves long-liv'd. Such are Formalists, they hastily catch at Christ, before they are humbled for sin, or melted by godly sorrow, and therefore do as quickly forsake him : The like may be gathered from that other Parable of the wise and foolish builders, *Luke 6. 47, 48.* The wise Builder, *κεκλήσθη ἡ οἰκὸς αὐτοῦ*, digged deep, and laid his foundation on a rock ; the foolish built without a foundation on the Earth, surely Humiliation and thorow conviction is (at least in part) the import of that digging deep ; and for want of this digging, the building doth, *molà sua rueret*, fall by its own weight : for want of these dewes and moistures the root is dried up from beneath, and above the bud is cut off, *Job 18. 16.* As the natural, so the spiritual birth is attended with pangs. Now the Formalist is one that never felt these, or not to purpose, never so as to bring him off his own righteousness, or to subdue his will to an acceptance of Christ upon Gospel terms. But here I desire to be rightly understood ;

stood; I prescribe not such a measure of humiliation as necessary, nor to all the like measure: there is great difference as to the manner, measure, and continuance of it; all are not thrown upon the ground, and deprived of their sight as *Paul* was; all walk not in the Region of the shadow of death, nor go bowed down 18 years with a spirit of Infirmity: To some God comes in a fire, thunder and whirlwind, to others in a still voice; as God teacheth us to put a difference, *Jude* 22, 23. so himself doth doth; on some he hath compassion, others he saves with fear, pulling them out of the fire; the convictions and humiliation of some are more sensible & terrible, like the breaking of stones with a hammer; they are brought by the gates of Hell to Heaven; of others, more sweet, kindly and insensible, like the melting of wax before the fire, and Ice or Snow before the Sun. The Souls of some are taken by storm, others by a long and tedious siege and battery; some are surprized, as it were, by stratagem, and some surrendered upon Parley; yea, some are so wrought upon, that the first (sensible) work they experience, is Grace, drawing them to a volun-

vary resignation of their souls to God. All these worketh our gracious God according to his own Will and Pleasure; nor can any certain stated Rules be laid down about the various workings of God with poor souls. Nevertheless, these two things I conceive may be safely asserted:

1. That before a soul is brought, or upon a souls coming over to Christ, he hath such a convincing sight of sin, and of his own sin original and actual, with such a measure of compunction & contrition (be it less or more) as doth make him both see an absolute necessity of Christ, and willingly close with him upon Gospel conditions. (I speak here of God's working upon the *adult.*) 'Tis not merely the love of Christ, or his excellency apprehended, that attracts the soul to him; but withal, he sees he stands in need of him, and is undone without him. I would fain know of any of those pretended Patrons and Assertors of free-Grace, how a soul can have any apprehensions of the love of Christ to purpose, without some pravius apprehensions and convictions of its own sinfulness and misery: Is it not the very Emphasis of the love of Christ,

Christ, that while we were yet sinners he died for us? *Rom. 5. 8. That when we were lost, he came to seek and save us?* take away this sense of sin and misery, and you take away the very accent of Christ's love. Is not this the language of a Soul under the most kindly workings? O infinite Love! that such a vile, sinful, lost wretch as I am should be sought for, inquired after! much like the language of *Mephibosheth* to *David*, *2 Sam. 9. 8. What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look up on such a dead dog as I am?* And *Ch. 19. 28. All my fathers house were but dead men before my Lord the King, yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thy table.* Here's deep and deep; depth of Misery, and depth of Mercy; these jointly apprehended, melt the heart of a poor sinner, and make it as water, or rather as wax, fit for any Divine impression: so that there is in the soul, under most ingenuous and kindly workings, sense of sin, and sorrow for it, though swallowed up in the joyful sense of God's love in Christ Jesus.

2. And after a soul is come to Christ, the frame of the heart is such, that it's ready to grieve and melt upon the sight

and conviction of a sin now committed, or the remembrance of a sin formerly acted: *Hezekiah* humbled himself for the pride of his heart, *1 Chron.* 32. 26. We find *Peter* in the same temper, and *David* often; the stone being taken out of the heart, there is an habitual tenderness, ready to exert it self in kindly meltings, upon sight of any unkindnesses, and disingenuous actings towards God, Christ, or the Spirit: Now to both these, the Formalist is a stranger: his will was never subdued, his heart never molified so far, as to go out of himself: Bring this note home, and try your state by it, I beseech you.

4. He is a Formalist, who though he is constant in the matter, yet is little or not at all conscientious in the manner of duty. That it be done, he is very careful; but how, he regards not. The Formal Jews were so constant at their sacrifices, that there God will not blame them, *Psal.* 50. 8. The sincere Christian is no less troubled for his carelessness, customariness, wandrings and distractions in, then for his omissions of duty; he accounts that as not done, which is not done with some suitableness of affection,
but and

and exercise of grace : he thinks he hath but mockt God, and taken his Name in vain : But this troubles not the Formalist ; he is a good Church-man (as they call him) constant at his Family-duties, &c. and never matters how cursorily and slubbringly they are performed : his care is to get it done, the sincere Christians, to get it well done, thinking himself never the better for that Duty that makes him not better ; never the nearer for that which brings him not further out of himself, and nearer God. Try then ; Canst thou never remember the time when thy heart smote thee for thy negligence in, as well as neglect of Duty ? Dost thou go on merrily and confidently in a cold, dull, heartless course of Religious Performances ? 'Tis a sad sign thou art yet a Formalist, and to thee the Text speaks terror.

5. He is a Formalist whose Duties do no execution upon his sins ; he Prays, and sins ; Hears, and sins ; goes in a round, as a Horse in a Mill : Take him at his Prayers, you may hear him perhaps confessing his Worldliness ; but take him in the World, and you find him as covetous, as griping, as apt to defraud

as ever : he comes off his duties, as if he had but begg'd leave to sin, yea, sin gets strength by his performances : As the Harlot, *Prov. 7. 14, 15. I have Peace-offerings by me, this day I have paid my vows. Come, let us take our fill of love.* So he thinks his morning and evening-Duties procure him liberty to sin all the day ; when he hath heard, though the Word was never so pierceing, he never thinks more of it, to reform his heart or life by it ; that he hath heard satisfies him, never thinking what, or to what end he hath heard ; hence it is that no execution is done upon his lusts. Now with the sincere Christian 'tis far otherwise, his Duties give sin a shake, loosen it at the root : True indeed, a corruption may out-live many a Prayer, Sermon, Humiliation-day, without any sensible decay ; yea, may seem to get head, and grow more turbulent ; yet every Duty rightly performed, doth something towards the mortification of it : as in cutting down a tree, every stroak doth not bring it down, yet some chips are cut off, and in battering a Fort, every shot doth not beat it down, yet makes it weaker, and prepares it for the next. So every
Duty

Duty doth something weaken sin, at least thus, for that it increases the soul's hatred of it, and puts upon him a fresh engagement to pursue it to the death: examine then; doth sin get strength by thy Religious duties? dost thou grow into more love and liking of thy besome corruptions? (for that's the surest evidence of sins growth:) Then hast thou just cause to suspect thy self of formality, and to apply this terror to thy self.

6. The Formalist is ordinarily full of confidence and self-conceit, very supercilious towards poor bruised reeds, and doubting souls: he looks upon the weak Believer as no body in comparison of himself. Thus you see it in the Pharisees, *Joh. 7. 48. Luk. 18. 9-12. Paul* was once of this temper, *Rom. 7. 9.* He was alive without the Law once; i. e. highly conceited, and strongly confident of his good condition: so the Formalist seldom suspects himself, never is at a loss for his Evidences. The Devil befriends him, and helps him up to this Pinacle; he is not more an enemy to true saving Faith, then a friend to Presumption. The sincere Christian (on the other hand) is very suspicious, often trying, doubt-

ing, searching; works out his salvation with fear and trembling. 'Tis true some healthy, well-complexion'd Christians, (but oh how rare are they!) keep up faith in a lively and constant exercise, can look within the veil, and are not subject to those frequent tossings and doubtings as others; but then they do not brow-beat, and carry scornfully and contemptuously towards those that have not attained to their Measure: they are very tender towards the weakest Lambs in Christ's fold, and can sympathize in their weaknesses, and help to bear their Infirmities. That supposed assurance that is joined with the contempt of weak ones, and separated from a holy, humble, watchful walking with God, is a sure note of a Formalist. There is fear and jealousy in the best; *David, Psal. 139. 20—end.* professes his sincerity, yet suspects there may be some way of wickedness in him: so that if thou hast high presumptions, and low performances, strong confidence upon weak grounds, and this lifts thee up in thy own conceit above thy weak brethren; conclude thy self but yet a Formalist.

7. The Formalist hath some regard to the matter of the first Table, little to the second: Piety, as to the face of it, he practiseth, but equity and charity he little looks at, perhaps nor sobriety neither, he thinks his duties towards God may excuse his deficiencies towards men (And herein by the way, the Moralist and Formalist differ; the former being onely or chiefly for second table duties, though both do *convenire in tertio*, agree in this third thing, that they neglect Christ, and put confidence in their own righteousness,) This that I say of the Formalist is evident, *Psal.* 50. 8. with verse 18, 19, 20. They were constant at their sacrifices, but deeply guilty of Theft, Adultery, evil-speaking, and false accusations: with the same mouth did they bless God, or curse or speak evil of man made after the image of God, *Jam.* 3. 9. so *Jer.* 7. 4. They cry *The Temple of the Lord.* i. e. duties, sacrifices; but verse 5, 6. *They did not execute judgment between a man and his neighbour, they oppressed the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, they shed innocent blood, &c.* so verse 9. *They did steal, murder, commit adultery, and swear falsely,*

falsely. The like you may see *Iſa.* 58. 2. *They ſeck me daily, and delight to know my ways,* &c. yea, verſe 3. They challenge God, and charge him as not having regard to their faſting, and afflicting their Souls: yet theſe, verſe 4. *did faſt for ſtrife and debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſs.* See more of their failings towards their neighbour, verſe 6, 7, 9, 10. Where Gods calling for ſuch duties at their hands, ſufficiently intimates their defectiveness in them. Poſſibly ſome ſmaller acts of righteouſneſs or mercy they may doe; ſo did the Pharifees, *Matth.* 23. 23. *They ſirbed Mint, Annife and Cummin, but the weightier points of the law, judgment, mercy, or faith,* (that is, as ſome with good reaſon interpret, faithfulneſs in their dealings with men) theſe they neglected. Yea, by their rare device of *Corban*, i. e. a gift given to the Prieſt or Temple, that their Parents might be prayed for, diſoblige the child from that neceſſary duty of ſuccouring his neceſſitous Parents: *Matth.* 15. 5. 6. with *Mark* 7. 11, 12. Thus making pretended piety towards God, a cloak for neglect of duty towards man: and up-

on this account how many Formalists are to be found amongst us? are not many, that have set up Prayer and reading in their Families, who frequent Ordinances, and seem to be eminent in piety, as bad, yea much worse in second-Table-duties, then the prophane? Who more griping and oppressive? Who more ready to over-reach in Bargaining? To defraud or abridg their Minister of his due? So that (as to the business of equity, and justice of people towards their Minister) we could rather desire to be cast upon a prophane, superstitious, ignorant people, then amongst knowing Formalists: Besides, who more quarrelsome? fuller of strife and debate? more apt to go to Law for trifles, then these? Can these things consist with sincerity? are they not plain evidences of a rotten heart, a meer Formalist? Surely sincerity hath an equal respect to all God's Commandments, will not knowingly bank any; much less make obedience to one, a cloak of disobedience to another.

8. Add one more briefly: The Formalist is regardless of his own heart: A stranger to that Duty *Solamen* presses,

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Prov. 4. 23. Keep thy heart above all keeping. This is (if I may so speak) the very *Formalis Ratio*, the Essence of Formality, that the heart is wanting in all he doth: he hath an eye to his Conversion, (as far as it is obvious to the eye of others) but lets his heart run at liberty. Now the sincere Christian's work is most within; his greatest care is in weeding, dressing, keeping clean, watching over his own heart: he hath a wary eye to every entrance and out-going of the soul. Thus you see some rude draught of a Formalist: Judge your selves by these Characters; and, if you find cause, apply the Text and Doctrine to your own hearts; rectifie your mistakes, and judge of your selves as the Word judges of you; it may do you good: for this is not a judgment of final decision, but of trial and discussion, which may bring you into the right way.

4. The fourth and last Use I shall make of the Doctrine, is Exhortation, in which, 1. A word to the Prophane, 2. To the Formalist.

CHAP. VII.

*The fourth and last Use of the point,
viz. Exhortation: And first to the
Profane, That they will improve
their hopes: Prosecuted, 1. by Di-
rections. 2. Encouraging Motives.*

1. **T**O you that wallow in the mire of
sin, and drink the very dregs of
iniquity; see your hopes, your possibi-
lities, your probabilities for Heaven, and
lay hold on them: possibly some of you
may conceit your case hopeless and de-
sperate, but take not up such sad conclu-
sions: There is yet hopes in *Israel* con-
cerning this thing; say not then with the
Eunuch and stranger, *Isa. 56. 3.* The
Lord hath utterly separated me from his
people, *Behold I am a dry tree*: Nor with
the Apostate Jews, *Jer. 2. 24.* *There is
no hope, &c.* Despair will make you de-
sperate: 'Tis the Epicures language,
1 Cor. 15. 32. *Let us eat and drink, for to-
morrow we die: (q. d.)* Let us take our
fill of pleasure and voluptuousness here,
we know not what our portion will be in
another world; none are so obstinately
wicked,

wicked, as they that have hardned themselves by despair. I have read of one, who after a first and second relapse from purposed and promised Reformation, being the third time visited with sickness, sent for his Minister, who minding him of his former promises and failings in performance, aggravating his sin upon him, he told him, that except he did speedily and seriously repent, and put away his Harlot (who was then in his house) there was no hope of his Salvation. His reply was, Say you so, can I not be saved except I put her away ? Then I will do as well as I can while I live ; so calling for Wine, Cards, and that Woman, he spent his time (which was but three or four days) in mirth and pleasure, and so in a moment went down into the grave. Oh take heed of bringing yourselves to this pass ! That Scripture is notable, *Job 15. 21, 24. A dolorful sound is in his ears, Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid. Here's his despair, or horror of Conscience : see the effect of it, Verse 25, 26. He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty : he runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers.*

lxxi. Some wild Beasts, when hunted to a stand, will turn again, and fly in your face : So do sinners, when grown desperate, even fly in the face of God himself. 'Tis the Devils ordinary way, when he hath drawn men into sin, and kept them in it as long as he can, when they begin to think of turning, to persuade them there is no hope. Oh but consider the Text, possibly thy case may be more hopeful then many a one that passes in the world for a sincere Christian : yet the door is open, the Golden Scepter is held out ; thy case is not desperate ; make it not so by going on still in thy wickedness : Presumption begins obduration ; but despair heightens and compleats it. If once thou drink in this deadly conclusion, That there is no possibility of Salvation for thee, thou wilt then bid defiance to God : This made one shoot his darts against Heaven ; another throw up handfuls of his own blood, crying out *Vicisti Galilae*, *O Galilean*, thou hast overcome : A third, wish himself above God, that he might be able to grapple with him, and a fourth lay violent hands upon himself, and become his own Executioner. This is it that makes
the

The Devil & Devil, *John. 3. 19. He believes and trembles*: 'Tis a Hell worse then Hell it self: See therefore, and lay hold on any opportunity: Publicans and Harlots, (saith the Text) go into the Kingdom of God, art thou worse? 'Twas a cheering word to poor blind *Bartimeus*, *Mar. 10. 49. Be of good comfort, rise, he calleth thee.* The same I may say to you, he came to call sinners (and are not you such) to repentance: Oh that you would now imitate that poor blind man, who *V. 50.* cast away his Garment, rose and came to Jesus, *Acts 13. 43.* with *47. 48.* See how the Gentiles rejoiced and flockt in, when God vouchsafes them an invitation: Poor souls! They thought God had cast them off, and not reserved such a blessing for them; therefore they are even ravished with the glad tidings, and become as Corn fully ripe, that shake into the hand of the Reaper; or as mel- low fruits, dropping into the mouth of him that gathers them: Oh that the discovery of the like hopes for you prophane sinners, might have the like operation upon you! Oh that I could hear some poor soul pouring out such breathings as these! What? Is there hope

for me? for me an old Drunkard, an unclean wretch, &c? Will Christ vouchsafe to give me a call, an invitation? Is it possible, that I, that have spent my choice time, exhausted my best spirits, &c. upon sin, should yet be in a possibility of Heaven? Is it thy pleasure, dear Saviour, to bestow thy Blood and Merits, thy Grace and Spirit, yea, an heavenly Inheritance, a Crown of Glory on such a dead dog as I am? Surely though none could have less hope, yet none hath more need then I; since there is a peradventure, I will go in, if I perish, I perish: Oh take the Prophets Counsel, *Isa. 55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Give me leave to sub-join two or three words of Direction, and as many of Encouragement.

1. Come within the call of Christ. Be at the *Bethesda* of Ordinances; put your selves under the Physicians hands, if you will be cured: *Faith comes by hearing, Rom. 10. 17.* Miss not an opportunity; you know not when the Spirit will blow,

or the Angel descend to move these waters: Though God hath called some from the Ale-bench, Tavern, Stews, Retreat of Custom; yet it is not to be presum'd God will do so; 'tis out of Gods ordinary road. Those whom Christ cured, or called, were such ordinarily as were in his way: So the ten Lepers, *Luke 17. 12.* The blind man, *Luke 18. 35.* The wounded man lay in the way betwixt Jerico and Jerusalem, &c. *Zachens* got into the Sycamore-tree where Christ was to pass by, *Luke 19. 4, 5.* and he hears that glad tidings, *Come down Zachens, &c. Ezech 16. 6. When I passed by thee—I said unto thee, live: 'Tis good to be where Christ may pass by us, and that is in his Church, amongst his people; for his walk is in the midst of the seven golden Candlesticks, Rev. 2. 1. Wisdom cries without, she uttereth her voice in the streets; she crieth in the chief place of concourse, &c. Prov. 1. 20—* What hope must thou conceive if thou waitest at her Gates, and watchest daily at the posts of her doors, since such are pronounced blessed, *Prov. 8. 34?* Some have been caught in the net before they were aware, (a happy catching!) yes, when they came to catch,

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carp and deride. What hope maist thou have, if thou wilt constantly and conscientiously wait upon God in his Ordinances?

2. Call upon Christ, cast thy self at his feet, with the Lepers, and the blind man, *Luk. 18. 41.* *Lord, that I might receive my sight.* Learn the Publicans posture, *Luk. 18. 13.* *Lord be merciful to me a sinner.* Take the Apostles counsel to Simon Magus, *Act. 8. 27.* *Pray that the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee:* such prayers, (whatever some say) shall not be rejected, else why doth the Holy Ghost direct to the use of them? Christ hath taught thee importunity, *Luk. 18. 1-8.* Put his Lesson in practice; beg pardon and justification: say to Christ, Lord spread thy spirit over me, since thou art become a near kinsman: Beg Sanctification; Lord here's a filthy heart, O cleanse it; a hard heart, O mollifie it; a dead heart, O quicken it: Plead such free Promises as that, and put them in suit, *Psalm. 95. 26.* *Take, Lord, the stone out of my heart, and give me an heart of flesh: for my stone is hard upon me, &c.* Take up *Isaiah's* words, *Jer. 32. 28.* *Turn thee to me, and*

I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God. And Hos. 14. 1, 2. Plead the examples of such as thou art, whose conversion is recorded for thy encouragement; *Magdalen, Zachary, Paul*: see that sweet Scripture, 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16. How be it, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. Cast thy self upon him, in confidence of that word; Joh. 6. 37. Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast off: Plead as the servants of *Benhadad*, 1 King. 20. 34. I have heard the God of Israel is a merciful God. A meer peradventure should be enough to an undone Creature, as it was to the four Lepers, 2 King. 7. 8. much more when thou hast such invitations and encouragements to allure thee to come in. *3. Cast away thy transgressions*, Ezek. 18. 31. Thou canst not be saved in them, but from them thou maist: This is the good old way wherein onely thou shalt find rest for thy soul. Jer. 6. 16. This doctrine will abide the fire, when all the wood, hay and stubble of novel and unscriptural speculations, will be burnt.

'Tis Christ's own Doctrine, *Luke 13. 3.*
 5. Away then with thy lewd compani-
 ons, excess, revellings; put away those
 works of the flesh, *Gal. 5. 22.* else take
 no comfort in all: I have said, read o-
 ver the examples of all those that were
 saved, especially such prophane ones as
 thy self: Was not this valley of *Achor*,
 bitter Repentance, their door of hope:
 'Tis not *Paul* the Persecutor, but *Paul*
 the Penitent, the faithful Apostle, that is
 in Heaven: Not *Zachens* the Oppressor,
 but *Zachens* the Restorer: Not *Magda-*
len the Harlot, but *Magdalen* the Peni-
 tent; weeping *Magdalen*, washing Christ's
 feet with her tears, and wiping them
 with the hairs of her head: And what is
 there in any sin, that hopes of future
 glory should not make thee willing to
 part with it? Is the Favour of God? Are
 the Consolations of the Spirit? The Pri-
 viledges of the Saints? Is Heaven, and
 Glory, and the eternal fruition of the
 Beatifical Vision, so contemptible, that
 they cannot out-bid one base lust? Are
 the pleasures of sin for a season, better
 then the eternal recompence of reward?
 Are devouring flames, everlasting burn-
 ings such light matters, so easie to be
 G 3 endured,

endured, that for the enjoyment of some worldly delight or contentment, perhaps for some sin that hath in it neither profit nor pleasure, (such as swearing is) you should plunge your selves into them irrecoverably? Do you believe those eternal things, or no? If not, Why do you come to hear? Why do you not declare your selves professed Atheists, and lay aside all Profession of Religion? Why do you not take your fill of carnal pleasures? But if you do believe them, (as I know you will profess you do) why do you not put away your abominations? Why do you not fly from the wrath to come, by bringing forth fruits meet for Repentance? Will you yet say, my case is hopeless, I have sinned away my opportunities? Look once again into the Text, see who the persons are; Publicans, and Harlots: What their privilege is; they go into the Kingdom of God: To whom they are preferred, as to their hopes of Salvation; the Morally Righteous, the Formal Professor, you may (if you will take the course prescribed) step into Heaven before them: But that I may leave you without scruple in this particular, take these two

considerations further along with you,

1. Will not God, think you, be most ready to do that which best pleases, and most honours him ? and what's that but pardoning the Penitent, embracing returning Prodigals ? Do you question this ? A great part of Scripture, yea, the very scope of the Gospel may convince you. Read *Jer.* 9. 24. *Mich.* 7. 18. *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. *Isa.* 55. 7. *Joel* 2. 12, 13-- Will you believe God upon his word ? he hath told you, *Ezek.* 18. 32. that he hath no pleasure in the death of him that dieth : will you have his Oath ? *Ezek.* 33. 11. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live ; [herein he hath pleasure :] turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, &c.* If neither Word nor Oath will serve, yet I hope his Actings, and gracious Dispensations towards the sons of Men, towards your selves, may pass for a Demonstration : Had God delighted in the Destruction ; yea, had he not had unspeakably more delight in the salvation of poor sinners, would he have sent his Son ? Would he have published the Gospel ? Would he wait, and beseech, and so pathetically

cally beg your souls? 2 Cor. 5. 19. And for thy own case, could not God have thrown thee into Hell so soon as thou wast born, if that had pleased him? Would he have been at so much cost and pains with thee? Or if thou now returnest, will he not accept thee; yea, meet thee while yet afar off, fall upon thy neck, and kiss thee, who hath been so long waiting that he might be gracious unto thee? And then for the honour of God; 'tis true, he can get it in thy destruction, but he had rather thou wouldest give it him in thy Salvation: Such is his Philanthropy, and love to man, that he esteems that his greatest honour, which consists with his creatures greatest happiness. Let me speak a serious word; Which do you think will make the sweeter melody in God's Ear? whether the eternal howlings and yellings of the damned, blaspheming, and tearing his Name in pieces; or the incessant Blessings and Hallelujahs of glorified Saints, singing Praises to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever? And for you to whom I am speaking [Prophane sinners] How singularly pleasing will it be to God? How delightful

fightful to the Angels, &c. to entertain
 you into their heavenly society? (to en-
 tertain you, I say, not such as now you
 are, but washt in the blood of the Lamb,
 cloath'd with white linnen, which is the
 Righteousness of the Saints) read, and
 read again those three Parables of the
 Prodigal son, the lost groat, and lost
 Sheep, *Luke* 18. They tell you, there is
 more joy in Heaven over one sinner that
 repenteth, then over ninety and nine
 just persons that need no repentance; and
 for the glory of God, he will both get
 more by you, (for the Physician's skill is
 commended by the desperateness of the
 disease he cures) and you wil (at least
 endeavour) give him more then others: If
 we may imagine an holy strife and emula-
 tion amongst the glorified Saints, to excel
 each other in praising God; surely they
 that have exceeded others in sinning here,
 will in singing hereafter: they to whom
 most is forgiven, will love most, admire
 most, and labour to rise highest in their
 praises: So that this may be helpful a-
 gainst any discouraging fears of being
 rejected: 'Tis singularly pleasing and
 honouring to God, that you should come
 in; you cannot suppose God unwilling
 to

to receive you upon your serious return, but you suppose him also false in his word, his oath; deceitful in his actions, and unfaithful to the great interest of his own glory: all which is no less than blasphemy to imagine.

2. Will Jesus Christ, think you, be more willing that his blood should be spilt, and the great end of his undertaking frustrate (as to you) in your destruction, then accomplished in your salvation? Did he take all that pains, undergo such a shameful and ignominious death, the wrath of God, the terrors of Hell, to save poor lost souls? and now all is done, and ready, nothing wanting but your consent and application; And can you imagine, that he will rather lose all, then freely bestow what he hath so dearly purchased? True, he is not so prodigal of his blood and merits as to throw them away upon those that neither see their need of them, nor will thank him for them; but when you are sensible of your necessity, and humbly sue to him for an interest in them, and cast yourselves upon him, do you think he will cast you off? Hath he done the painful part, and will he not much more do the pleasant

pleasant part of the work? Will it not be abundant satisfaction to see the fruit of the travel of his soul, in the Conversion and Salvation of yours? O with what contentment and complacency will Christ embrace you? Welcome poor Prodigal, lost, weary, heavy-laden soul; now it repents me not of all my toil and travel: 'tis enough that thou wilt accept what I have done and suffered for thee; I freely give thee my Blood to justify thee, my Merit to procure thy acceptance with the Father; my Grace to sanctify thee, my Spirit to seal thee to the day of Redemption; yea, Heaven is self for thine Inheritance: mine it is by purchase, and on thee I bestow it; I expect nothing but thy ingenious acceptance, and grateful obedience: Oh, you cannot more disparage the wisdom or mercy of Christ, then to imagine him unwilling to bestow himself, and all he hath done, upon those that humbly beg it, in the deep sense of their own necessity: so that let not the vilest wretch, the prophaneft sinner in the Congregation, stand off upon supposition that God will not accept him, or that Christ will cast him off: You see in the Text, who were
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the chief materials of that stately Fabrick, the Church; when Christ and his Apostles were the builders, even Publicans and Harlots, sinners, such as yourselves are: With whom did Christ converse? Whom came he to call? Who were they most commonly embraced by him, but such? Nay, such were not only stones in the building, but Master-builders, even *Paul* (though a Pharisee yet) in his own account, a Persecutor, a Blasphemer, Injurious, *1 Tim. i. 13*. If you want not hearts, you want no hopes for Heaven. All this I have spoken, not in the least to strengthen your hands in wickedness, (Woe to him that shall so turn this grace of God into wantonness) but to remove that scruple which possibly may keep some at a distance from Christ; nor would I be understood as encouraging any to delay their turning to God, presuming upon acceptance at last gasp. Remember that of *Austin*, *Qui dat penitenti gratiam, semper dat peccanti penitentiam*: He that gives pardon to the Penitent, doth not always give Repentance to the Sinner. Comethen, Prophane Sinner, come speedily, seriously, humbly, and self-denyingly

ingly to Christ, and I promise thee acceptance; Make good the Text, Step into Heaven, and lay hold on Eternal Life before the proud Formalist. Then, though such as they despise thee, God will accept, and prefer thee before them: Then, however filthy and polluted thou art, thou shalt be washed in the Lambs blood, cloth'd with his Righteousness, made comely with his comeliness, and admitted into that blessed society, *Heb. 12. 12, 13, 24.* there to continue to all Eternity.

CHAP. VIII.

The second branch of Exhortation, viz. to the Formal Hypocrite, to hasten out of his dangerous condition; urged by divers Motives.

AND now I turn to you the other subjects of my Text, Formal Christians, who are painted Sepulchres, Graves that appear not, *Luke 11. 44.* I have endeavoured to work upon the other hopes, I shall now endeavour to work upon your fears: your condition, you see, is sad and deplorable, yet not desperate;

desperate : Have you not often in your thoughts (and it may be in your speeches) passed a sad doom upon the profane ? When you have heard them swearing and blaspheming the Name of God, imbruing their tongues in the blood and wounds of Christ, when you have seen them wallowing in their drunkenness, O have you not thought, O I would not be in that mans condition for all the world yet by what hath been said, you see your state in some respect worse then theirs that there is a greater likelihood of their salvation, then of yours : What remains then, but that you turn your eyes inward and take up the same thoughts concerning your selves, which formerly you have had of them ? you see what thoughts our Saviour had of such as you are, *Luke 18. 9-14.* there he tells you that a penitent Publican is rather justified (and consequently saved) then proud self-justifying Pharisees : in all his Preaching, What do such as you hear, but woe, as *Matth. 23. 13-14* and ? when a broken-hearted *Magdalen* hears a few words, *Luke 7. 48.* *Thy sins are forgiven* : when *Zachary* hears a gracious call, *Luke 19. 6.* *Come down Zachary, this day is salvation*

come to thy house, forasmuch as he is all
 like the Son of Abraham: and generally
 weary, heavy-laden sinners have a loving
 invitation, *Matth. 11. 28. Come unto me*
all ye that labour and are heavy laden,
 back with a sweet promise, *I will give you*
rest. Oh then, let fall those plumes of
 pride which have been lifted up so
 much above others; glory not in your
 specious formalities and outside clean-
 liness. *That which is highly esteemed a-*
mongst men, is abomination in the sight of
God. Luke 16. 15. Bear not your selves
 high upon your parts, morality, or ex-
 ternal performances, while there are se-
 ven abominations in your hearts, *Prov.*
16. 15. Think not that your credit a-
 mongst men will bestead you before the
 all-knowing God. But hasten out of
 your woful state; learn that first and
 hardest lesson of Christianity, self-denyal:
 labour to get what yet you want, a heart
 deeply humbled for sin, an absolute dis-
 claim of self-righteousness, and submissi-
 on to the righteousness of Christ, and
 Truth in the inward parts. Something
 I shall add by way of motive, and then
 directions.

1. Will it not grieve thee to the heart

to have lost so many duties, prayers, days of hearing, fasting, thanksgiving. It may be many tears and sighs, yea many scoffs, reproaches and injuries suffered for thy profession. Let me take up the Apostles words, *Gal. 3. 4. Have you suffered so many things in vain, if they be yet in vain?* Will it not cut thee to the heart, to be separated from that society in heaven, with which thou hast associated here on earth? That, that which hath helpt others to heaven, should accidentally plunge thee deeper into hell. That thou hast done and suffered more than many a one in glory, for the name and profession of Christ, and all lost. Lost, 1. As to any acceptance with God here. 2. As to any advantage to thy self hereafter: How will it repent thee of what thou hast done and suffered in the profession of Religion? how wilt thou wish that thou hadst joined with the prophane crew? that thou hadst never had those gifts, made that profession, done those duties, which shall be (not only lost as to any benefit to thy self, but) as so many weights to press thee deeper into hell; Stings in thy torment, and brands to increase the flame.

and shall stand uncancelled, as so many dreadful Items in God's Book of remembrance, rendring thy account more heavy? Oh, will it not grieve you, when others have sworn, and drunk, and whor'd themselves into hell, that thou hast hear'd, and pray'd, and fasted thy self thither? (pardon the harshness of the expression, I mean by an ill management of those duties) when others are damned for prophaneness, thou for thy (hypocritical) profession? others for their sins, thou for thy (feigned) services? *1 Cor. 15, 19.* If a Christian hath hope onely in this life, he is of all men most miserable: the reason is, because they deny themselves of worldly contentments, expose themselves to continual crosses and vexations, in expectation of future glory, which, if they miss of, they are every way miserable. This is thy condition: further, will it not grieve thee to be thrust into Hell with that company which here thou abhorredst? to be turned out with the workers of Iniquity, *Psal. 135, 148.* Nay, to have a hotter Hell then they? All this perhaps may sound harsh in your ears, and you may suppose them to be but the Hyperbolical expres-

fions of an Orator, declaiming against
 this sin, or the over-heated eruptions
 of mistaken Zeal, and misguided Passion :
 No, my Brethren, they are the words of
 Truth and soberness : The greater sin
 shall have the greater punishment, (that's
 a known and granted maxime:) Now thy
 sins are greater then many (I will not
 say then any) prophane person's : Is not
 contempt of Christ, and setting light by
 him, setting up your own Righteousness
 in opposition to his, trampling upon his
 precious blood, a greater sin then Swear-
 ing, Drunkenness, &c? Is it not Rebel-
 lion at the height, *Rom. 10. 3.*—have not
 submitted themselves unto (i. e. have
 rebelled against) the Righteousness of
 God? Hereby you evacuate the suffer-
 ings of Christ, expunge the Gospel, and
 charge Christ with an unnecessary un-
 dertaking, yea, with self-murder. Trem-
 ble then at the sight of your condition,
 Truly, when I look on a Formalist,
 and consider what pains he takes ; his
 constancy in Hearing, Prayer, and o-
 ther duties ; when I look upon his almost
 spotless and unblameable conversation,
 methinks 'tis pity such should be thrown
 into Hell: But when I consider that pride &
 oppo-

opposition to Christ lies at the root of all this, when I see him strutting in his own rags, and will not be beholden to Christ, when he thinks the greatest severity is little enough, and the bottell corner in Hell cool enough to punish his desperate madness. Oh to slight the love of Christ, to make void his sufferings, to ex-authorize him of his Mediatory office, how great a sin is it, and how great punishment doth it deserve? But I am almost digressed from that which I propounded. Well, if thou wilt not lose the work which thou hast wrought, 2 Job. 8. if thou wilt not lose thy duties, or be a loser by them, Get out of this condition.

1. Will it not grieve thee to see Publicans and Harlots admitted into Heaven, and thy self cast out? See *Math. 8. 11, 12.* *Many shall come from the East, and West, and shall sit down, &c.* But the Children of the Kingdom (the formal Jews) shall be cast out into utter darkness, *There* (tis emphatical) *shalt thou be weeping, and gnashing of teeth.* Possibly thou livest amongst a company of prophane Neighbours; and when thou hearest some cursing and swearing, seest others prophaning the Lord's Day, some

H 2 Drunkards;

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Drunkards; others unclean and debauched in their lives; all of them scoffing at God, and Holiness, which thou professest: thou blessest thy self, and sayest in thy heart (and not without good reason) as *Luk. 18. 11.* *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, &c.* But what if some of these, upon Repentance, step before thee into Glory? What if thou seest hereafter some of these in *Abraham's* bosom, and thy self in a Lake of brimstone? What if these, washed in the blood of the Lamb, cloth'd in the long white Robe, stand amongst the sheep at Christ's right hand, when thou in the filthy, stained rags of thy unrighteous righteousness, shalt be thrust amongst the Goats on his left hand; and when they hear, *Come ye Blessed, &c.* thou hearst, *Go ye Cursed?* Will not this even rend asunder thy heart-strings, and fill thy soul with unspeakable horror and consternation? Thus doubtless it will be if thou live and die in thy condition. Oh that I could provoke you to jealousy as God threatens to do; and did provoke the Jews by the conversion of the Gentiles, *Deut. 32. 21. Rom. 11. 11.* One day, doubtless, you will be

pro-

provoked to a sinful and malicious jealousy at this sight; but I had rather now provoke you to a veracious and holy jealousy, such as might rouse you out of your Formality, and make you altogether Christians. The Jews were never more incensed, then when they were told God had rejected them, and embraced the Gentiles, *Act. 22. 21, 22.* They gave him audience to that word, and then lift up their voices, and said, *Away with such a fellow from the Earth, for it is not fit that he should live.* The older Son grows sullen and envious at his Prodigal brothers entertainment and welcome, *Luk. 15. 28, 29.* 'Tis not this sinful envy that I would excite in you; but an holy jealousy, fear, emulation; lest such prophane ones should get before you into the Kingdom of God: If such a sight would be (as needs it must be) grievous and tormenting; endeavour now to prevent it by a timely escape from Formality; otherwise I shall say, as the Heathen Philosopher, who seeing the Christians eat their pretended God, cryed out, *Sit anima mea cum Philosophis*; so I, *Sit anima mea cum prophanis*, (*scil. penitentibus*;) I had rather be a penitent

*Autroas
a Mahur
met n.*

Thief, then a proud Formalist or Judiciary.

3. Thou never knewest, nor shalt know the real comforts of Christianity, while thou continnest in Formality: a painted Christian hath but imaginary comforts; the Hypocrite hath but *ausp. p. 207, Mat. 6. 2, 3.* a Hypocrites reward, proportionate to his service: Sincerity, as it shall onely wear the Crown hereafter, so it onely enjoyeth true solid consolation here: The joy of the Holy Ghost is their priviledge, who are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, not in his common gifts, but saving graces: The true waters of consolation are drawn out of those wells of salvation, the sense of God's special love shed abroad in the heart, the blood of Christ sprinkled upon the conscience, and the sanctifying Spirit of God, first working, and then shining upon his own work: He that is a stranger to these, is a stranger to true joy, and who but the sincere Christian hath these things? The stream can neither rise higher, nor continue longer then the fountain whence it arises, and what is the fountain of a Formalists comfort, but his own spotted righteousness, and sorry performances?

the

the web wherewith he covers himself is spun out of his own bowels, and this can neither afford him warmth, nor long endure: The sparks wherewith he encompasseth himself, are but from a fire of his own kindling; all the light and warmth he hath, is thence; and what then can his portion be, but at last to lie down in sorrow? *Is. 50. 11.* When he is brought to the King of terrors, his confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, *Job 18. 14.* His comfort is but a land-flood, violent, but not lasting. 'Tis evident; for,

1. All true comfort flows from Christ, from a saving interest in him, and reconciliation with God by him: this the Formalist hath not; he never drunk of that rock, but onely out of the muddy puddles of his own polluted duties, which have nothing but filth and gravel at the bottom.

2. True Consolation is the consequent of sound Humiliation (to which he is a stranger) *Psal. 126. 5, 6.* *They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy, &c. Isa. 66. 10.* There seems to be something to purpose intimated in that, *Prov. 14. 10.* *The heart knows his own bitterness, and the stranger inter-*

intermeddles not with his joy. Why may not the meaning be this, That as the heart hath its sorrows that others know not, so its comforts also; and he that never knew the one, shall never taste the other? however the thing is a Truth. The vapours of a truly humbled soul's tears, sighs, sorrows, exhaled, do afterwards come down in refreshing dews, and showers of consolation. Liquors bottled up, increase their strength and virtue: God bottles up the tears of his people, and these waters so bottled, are turned into wine of consolation. But the Formalist never knew how to weep for sin, as sin; he is a stranger to those Evangelical meltings, and therefore cannot have those reviving cordials of comfort.

3. True comfort is the fruit of a conscience pacified, purified, sanctified: 2 Cor 1.12. This is (*ἡ χαράνους ἡμῶν*) our exultation, the Testimony of a good Conscience, &c. such is not the Formalist's Conscience; silent and peaceable it may be, not pacified; for that's onely by the blood of sprinkling: it may bring in an absolving verdict, but it's upon mistake, which will be rectified by the supreme
Judg

Judge at the last day. Well then: Wouldst thou drink the pure wine of Consolation? Wouldst thou taste of the hidden Manna? Have the new Name? The white stone? Get out of thy Formality; Be that indeed, which now thou wouldest be accounted, and desirest to be found at last, A sincere Christian.

4. Let this consideration drive thee out of thy Formality: He that is no more then form, will, very probably, ere long, become less then form: Formality is but a water-colour; not laid in the oil of grace, not dried in the grain of Christ's blood, and therefore will fade: it will either wear off in time, or wash off with the waters of affliction. The Stage-Player who onely bears the person of a Prince; when his part is acted, and the Comedy ended, puts off his habit, and is but what he was before: The Formalist doth but personate and represent the Christian, and this will not always continue; *Job 27. 10.* Will the Hypocrite delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God? He will not: Artificial Christians will be but Temporaries: Such were *Judas*, *Demas*, *Julian*: nor wilt thou onely lose what thou

thou seemest to have, but become worse.
 The salt that hath lost its savour, makes
 the very ground it is cast upon, barren.
 The counterfeite friends of Religion, have
 often proved her most embittered Ene-
 mies. *Julian's* little finger (who once
 professed Christianity) was heavier then
 the loins of the other persecuting Empe-
 rors: rottenness in profession, often turns
 into rancor and malice against it. Had
 some of the Apostates of this age been
 told, while they made profession of the
 Truth, that they should become revil-
 ers of Ministers, contemners of Ordina-
 nances, violent Persecutors of that way
 they then professed; that they should
 be ready to pull out the eyes of those,
 for whom they seem'd willing even to
 pull out their own: would they not
 have been ready to say with *Hazael*,
 a King. 8. 13. *Is thy servant a dog, that*
he should do this great thing? Yet this
 is the fruit of Formality and Hypo-
 crisie: well, if yon would stand, and
 keep your station, be more then form.
 They that are but Comets will fall:
 and he that begins in Hypocrisie, will
 end in Apostasie: if thou hast onely a
 name to live, it will ere long appear that
 thou

thou art indeed dead : a meer name will not long preserve a man from *rottenness* and *putrefaction* : Formality will shrink in the wetting ; the fire will discover who are but dross, *Luke 8. 13.* Times of persecution, are times of falling off, to those that are not truly fixed : whence are all those sad falls in our days but from want of Truth in the inward parts? *Pf. 37. 31. The Law of the Lord is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide:* The Formalist hath the Law only in his head, and on his tongue; this is not enough to keep him from falling. And oh think what a Discredit it will be to turn Apostate, Renegado : How will God and man abhor thee? good men because thou art not what thou once seemedst to be ; bad men, because thou didst once seem to be good : get therefore out of this condition, which will have so sad an issue.

5. But suppose thou mayest hold out, it will be bitterness in the end ; however thou mayst escape the discredit and shame of Apostasie here, thou canst not escape the danger and damnation of thy Formality hereafter. The Text tells thee, that *Publicans* and *Harlots* go before thee into the Kingdome of Heaven ; but as they

they go, not before, but upon repentance; so neither shalt thou follow after, but upon the same condition. Formality will as certainly damn thee as any other sin; and thrust you as deep into hell, as almost any other, and what comfort will it be, that thou hast left a good name behind thee, that thou didst live and die under the repute of a sincere Christian? the mistaken commendations of surviving Christians, will be but a poor allay to the scorching flames of hell: yea, it will aggravate thy torment to think, (as probably thou mayest think) Now some are speaking and hoping well concerning me on earth, while I am howling and yelling in these flames. 'Tis some addition to a mans grief under extremity of pain or sickness, to be judg'd by others in a better state then indeed he is: To be canonized on earth is but sorry comfort to him that is condemned in hell! what good did the honours that were done to *Nero*, at, and after his death, do to him; though as the Historian tells us, *Non desuerunt qui Neronem vernis æstivisque coloribus ornarent*: There wanted not some to strow his cursed grave with the flowers of the spring:

Sal.

Sutton.

Salvian (as I find him quoted) complains, that *Multorum corpora splendens in sepulchris, quorum anima ardens in Gehemâ*. Some were rendred glorious at their funerals, whose miserable souls were frying in hell: a poor recompense! this is no allay, but is, or would be an aggravation of their torment, if they knew it. 'Tis storied of one preaching at the funeral of a supposed religious man, and giving him large commendations, a voice was heard, saying, *Mortuus sum, judicatus sum, condemnatus sum*: for the truth of the story, I shall leave it to your own discretion, whether to believe it or no; the moral may be good, that damned souls take little delight in the commendations of Survivors; for a man that takes a good Conscience with him, and whose good works follow him, it is something to leave a good name behind him, for *Prov. 10. 7. The memory of the just shall be blessed*; but where the two former are wanting, the last will rot sooner or later; the great day will rectifie all mistakes in that kind. If we would have a name that might outlive that day, we must get out of Formality, and come up to sincerity, which is Gospel-perfection.

CHAP. IX.

Helps or Directions to the formal Hypocrite, in order to his coming out of that condition, and becoming a sound and thorough Christian.

BUt that I may propound something by way of Cure and Remedy, (for what is it to discover a disease, and leave the Patient in it?) Take these helps against it.

Direct. 1. Get a convincing sight (and humbling sense of this sin) sight and sense of misery, is the great spur to put us upon seeking after remedy: the senselessly sick, will laugh in the face of the Physician, but he that feels his sickness, will embrace the cure: and however, in outward maladies it is not always necessary that the Patient be sensible in order to cure; yet in spiritual, the feeling of our distemper is not only a preparative to, but a good part of the Remedy. The will must concur to the Cure of Spiritual diseases, in order to which, the understanding must be convinced. But because it is one thing to see sin, and another to feel it, I shall speak to each severally. 1. Then,

7. Then, that thou mayest have a convincing sight of this sin, and that thy heart may be forced to acknowledg it, (besides the Notes and Characters before laid down) make use of these two Directions.

1. Be a narrow vigilant observer of thy own heart. The very essence of Formality lies in this, That all is done without heart or life. So that if thou findest thy heart stupid, senseless, without motion in duty, and this be thy constant frame: thence conclude thy self a meer Formalist. Were I to describe such a one, I would in short, call him, the Carcase of a Christian, one that hath the outward lineaments, but wants the life and soul of a Christian; that hath much of Religion in his head, and upon his tongue, but nothing of it in his heart: One that is moved and acted like a Puppet or Engine, not from an inward principle, but by an external poise or impulse. 'Tis true indeed, the best of Christians have their dead and cold sins; but these, as they are not constant, so they are their grief and burden, the matter of their complaint and humiliation. If therefore thou art constantly dead, and so far, as to be secure and senseless

less in, and of thy deadness, this may fasten the conviction of this sin upon thy heart.

2. Observe thy non-proficiency under Means. This is another evidence. A painted Tree or man is always in the same state, but the living grows; the living Christian thrives, and gets ground of corruption: Where there is a principle of Life, there will be growth. How did *Nicodemus* grow in Christian courage? *John* 3. 1, 2. compared with *John* 7. 50, 51. The smoking Flax will become a flame, and the morning glimpe come on to a noon-day brightness. True, the Christian is not alwayes sensible of his growth, nor a fit Judge of it. That of the Orator concerning growth in knowledg, may be fitly appli'd hither; As we see the shadow of a Dial to have gone, but see it not go; and the Herb or Grasse to have grown, but do not see it grow; so the increase of knowledg, (and the same may be said of Grace) because it consists of very small additions, is seen only at some distance. Yet with these limitations, I may affirm, That every true Christian is in a constant, thriving posture.

3. That he grows downward (like Trees in Winter) when he seems to decay upward: he grows more humble, when he seems to be

less holy ; and this is real growth. God in wisdom suspends his influences as to the growth of other Graces, that there may be a proportionable growth in that. Christians, like the *Athenian* Students, the more they grow in Grace, the more out of conceit with themselves : As they at their first coming thither, arrogated the Name of Σίμποι, Wise men; then Φιλόσοφοι, Lovers of wisdom : Afterwards Πηροποι, Speakers of wisdom. At last Ἰδιώται, Idiots. So it is with Christians.

2. That he grows more into hatred of sin, when he seems to decay in strength against it ; when he feels corruption prevail, lusts predominant ; he cries out with the Apostle, *Rom. 7. 15. What I hate, that do I.* And *v. 24. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* He more loaths sin and himself, that he cannot conquer it ; he abhors the very thoughts of it, and grows more impatient of its yoke.

3. That he grows in depth of Judgment, when he declines in height of Affection : possibly when young, he had more leaves and blossoms, stronger affections, and more fervorous motions, but now is more sober and solid. At first he was sick of love ;

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now

now more rooted in love.

But now it is otherwise with the Formalist; he experiences no such growth, but the contrary; he goes backward, and not forward; *Jer.* 7. 24. grows more proud and self-confident; sin grows less burdensome, or more delightful to him; as he hath less strength, so he hath less heart then formerly to resist sin, or perform duty. Conscience is in a consumption, and he that would have strain'd at a Gnat, can after some time swallow a Camel; he loses his seeming love to, and savour of Religion. Observe then if it be thus with thee; for by these thou mayest discover thy Formality.

2. But it is not enough to get a convincing sight of this sin, i. e. that thou art a Formalist, except thou hast also an humbling sense of it; there's a great distance betwixt the eye and heart; a man may clearly see that he is a sinner, yet be little affected with it; the Drunkard, Swearer, &c. cannot but see their sin, yet are far from feeling it: It must be therefore our endeavour, in order to the cure of this sin, to get the heart affected, as well as the Judgment convinced: Sin must be our burden, else we shall never look out for ease: To this end therefore it must be thy endeavour to view this sin in its

aggravations ; to consider, and dwell upon the consideration of its hainousness, till thy heart be pressed with the weight of it. To help thee a little in this, take a few things of many.

I. It is a sin that turns the greatest reality in the world into a meer shew and shadow : Religion is the greatest reality ; all we do in the World, besides the work of Religion, is but a meer dream ; Regeneration, Communion with God, the Spiritual combat, the Life of Faith, Mortification of sin, &c. these are realities indeed : Now Formality turns all these into a naked, empty Profession, a vain Theatrical shew ; (as the Poetical Fiction of the Eccho, metamorphos'd from a real Virgin, to a meer Sound) as the *Papists* have turn'd the true Fast, into a mock-fast ; Repentance and afflicting the soul, into lashings of the Body, and Pilgrimages ; the Sacrament of the Supper, into a dumb shew ; and the whole Worship of God into a ceremonious Enterlude : So the Formalist turns Prayer, Hearing, Sacraments, &c. into shadows ; and is this a small sin, think you ? Dwell upon this consideration ; how soon would Religion vanish into nothing, if there were not a few serious spirits to uphold it in the power of it ? This eats out the kernel,

the heart, the life of Religion. It was no less serious, then witty a division which one gave of that Text, *1 Tim. 3. 5. Having a form of godliness*.--Here (said he) you have, 1. The Body of Religion, viz. Form. 2. The Soul of Religion, viz. Power. 3. The death of Religion, and that is the separation of the Soul from the Body, Power from Form. This is the effect of thy sin, it murders Religion.

2. It is a mocking God to his very face; it's a lying to God, and will God endure it? What are your formal Petitions, Confessions, Thanksgivings, &c. but meer mockeries? Thou com'st to hear, but it is as they in *Jer. 42. 5, 6, 9.* who when they received a Message contrary to their designs, tell the Prophet to his face, that he lies; or as *Isa. 58. 2.* who were but as a people that did righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinances of their God---Or as they are described in *Ezek. 33. 31, 32.* The Prophet's Preaching was to them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice---*They heard his words, but did them not.* And what greater abuse can be put upon God, then for men to come, and pretend a desire to know his Will, yet to take no care of performing it? As to your prayers, I may invert that of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 14.*

14. Your

14. *Your understanding prayers, but the spirit is unfruitful.* Your approaches to the Lords Table, are no better than a *Judas's* kiss; nor can God take any more pleasure in your approaches, then he did in the like service of the *Jews*, *Isa. 1. 12--15. & 66. 3* You do but complement with God, and that is no better then meer mockery: O think how wretched a thing it is, how highly displeasingly your duties all of them, while you continue in Formality, are so many jeers and abuses put upon God.

3. By this sin you put a cheat and fallacy upon your own souls; you mock God, but deceive your selves. *Gal. 6. 3. If a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, [αυτὸς φανawat]* he deceives himself, seduces his own soul. *Jam. 1. 22.* Bare hearers do *παλαροῖς ὁμιλοῦντες*, play the sophisters, put tricks and fallacies upon themselves. So v. 26. *He that bridleth not his tongue, (and such ordinarily is the Formalist, bitter, railing, censorious) but deceiving his own heart, his Religion is vain:* And what greater madness than for a man to cheat himself? Lay this home, and aggravate your condition by it: Wretch that I am! I think to deceive God and the world, but I shall find at last that I have deceived

Psa. 125. 5 my own soul: Will not God both find me out in these crooked wayes, and turn me out with the workers of iniquity? *He that perverteth his wayes, shall be known,* Prov. 10. 9. *The self-flatterers iniquity shall be found hateful,* Psa. 36. 31. Can I carry it so closely, that God shall not find me out? Doth not his eye pierce, and his eye-lids try the children of men? Doth he not set our secret sins in the light of his countenance? Is there not a wo to them that dig deep to hide their sins (as well as their counsels) from the Lord? Thus labour to make thy heart sensible of this sin.

Isa. 29.
15, 16.

4. It is a sin of evil influence upon others. Warm and lively Christians are the great blessings of the places where they live; their zeal provokes many, 2 Cor. 9. 2. But a dead and heartless profession (especially if of any eminency in the Church) puts a stop to others who are apt to come up to their measure, and there to rest. The whole Army made a stand at *Amasa's* dead body; so do many at one dead Christian. How may a dead and formal Minister or Master of a Family, read his own in the Temper of his People or Family? As face answers face in a glass, so for the most part doth the complexion and temper of the Followers, an-

swer

2 Sam. 20.
12.

swer that of their Leaders. Aggravate thy sin by this consideration upon thy own heart. Vile wretch that I am! how many do I hinder in heaven's way? how doth my formality give occasion to some to think there is no reality in Religion; and to others to rest in the same temper? Were I a better Leader, my People, Family, Neighbours would be better Followers: If they perish in that sin, how justly may their Blood be charged upon my head?

5. It is a sin that insensibly hardens the heart; every sin is of that nature, *Heb. 3. 13*. But as none is (I think) more deceitful, so scarce any more hardning. One or two duties customarily and formally done, will be found mightily deadning and indisposing the heart to other duties afterward; By Formality in prayer, you may in time pray away both your Graces and Gifts; so you may by customary hearing, hear your selves quite deaf to all Gods counsels. This makes the heart of many like the trodden ^{2 Tim. 1, 6} path, or neather Millstone. Formality is a lazy sin; it doth not *κίναζουσι*, blow up the Gifts and Graces of Gods Spirit, and so the Fire goes out. Habits of laxiness are hardly shaken off, as we see in common Beggars; indulging a lazy temper, (which

Is the Formalists sin) must needs encrease it.

'Tis the Formalists frame, that of the sluggard; *Prov. 6. 10. and 26. 14. Tet a little*

Ver. 11. sleep, &c.—And what is said of him, may well be applied hither, *So shall thy poverty come as an armed man*—By this lazy, formal temper; spiritual poverty invades and

seizes upon the soul. Besides, this sin, as it hath a natural, so a judiciary tendency to hardness of heart; i. e. it provokes God to

Luk. 19. 26. give up to obduration; From him that hath not (so as to improve) shall be taken even that he hath, or seems to have. God will say to such in his just Judgment, *Sleep on, and take your rest; and as that great Commander, finding his Sentinel asleep, run him thorow, saying, Dead I found him, & dead I leave him.*

Thus God deals with the lazy, formal, sluggish Christian. Work this also on thy heart.

¶ 6. It is a sin that broodeth, hatcheth, cherisheth many other; Pride, Self-confidence, Contempt of others, are the natural products of it. Upon account of a con-

stant course of formal duties, men are apt to encourage themselves in sin; see *Jer. 7. 8, 9, 10.* 'Tis storied of one (an Italian as I remember) who us'd to patter over his prayers in the morning, and then challenge the Devil to do his worst. Let but a Formalist

observe

observe his own heart, and he shall find, That when he hath done something more then ordinary in a way of duty, he is apt to draw encouragements thence of being more loose afterward. Set this home: Oh what a Viper have I harbour'd in my bosome! How many sins hath this one sin let in, and drawn me into, &c?

7. It's a sin that brings both the surest and sorest destruction. To such is that cutting word of our Saviour directed, *Matth. 23. 33. Ye Serpents, ye generation of Vipers, how can you escape the damnation of Hell?* Hypocrites are Leaders in the Black Roll, *Matth. 24. last.* And as dissembled Sanctity is double iniquity, so shall it have a double portion of Misery. These things I have suggested to help you in aggravating this sin upon your own souls; it were easie to add many more, but any one of these laid close to the Conscience, will through the blessing of God, make the Soul groan under the weight of this sin.

This is the sum of the first step which a soul is to take in order to cure; Get a convincing sight, and humbling sense of thy sin; and would but the Lord bring on the Work thus far; could I but see your hands on your loins, could I but find you (*Ephraim,*
like)

like) smiting upon your thigh, ashamed, confounded; were you but thoroughly convinced of the guilt, and sensible of the weight of this sin, how hopeful might I be of effecting the Cure?

Direct. 2.

When it is thus (or rather, that it may be thus) with thee, make thy addresses to God in way of humble confession, and fervent petition. But to hint something briefly:

1. Fall down before the Lord in the shame and grief of thy own Soul, making self-condemning Acknowledgments, and aggravated Confessions of this sin. Thou **Luk. 18. 13** that hast been hitherto a proud Pharisee, now become an humble Publican. Learn *David's* posture, *Psal. 51. 3.* This is a singular way to get thy own heart affected; for indeed, it's a principal end of confession; we do not confess sin to inform God, but to humble and shame our selves. In confession thou mayest use the forementioned aggravations.

2. Add Petition to confession; beg a more lively sense of this sin; for it is not all thy own aggravating this sin upon thy soul, that will make thee feel it to purpose, till God take it, and set it upon thy Conscience; 'tis the Spirit of God that must to purpose convince of sin, *John 16. 8.* the
fins

firs which look but as Moats, will appear
 Beams in that Light which the Spirit of God
 darts into the Soul. Beg Contrition also,
 that acceptable Sacrifice of a broken heart,
 must be of Gods own preparing, the sor-
 row which is *natural*: according to God,
 2 Cor. 7. 10—must be from God, Zeck. 12.
 10. Beg pardon with the *Psalmist*, Ps. 51. 1.
 Firly may you use his Petition and Argu-
 ment, Psal. 25. 11. *Pardon my sin—for it*
is great; and take up the Publicans Po- Luk. 18. 13
 sture and Petition, smite on your breast, and
 say, *The Lord be merciful to me a sinner.*
 Beg strength against this sin; pray for Truth
 in the inward parts; pray as Psal. 119. 80.
Make my heart sound in thy statutes, that I
may never be confounded. Lord, I have the
 Lineaments, put into me the Life of a Chri-
 stian; make me what I seem, lest at last I be
 found what I would not; and here, take
 heed you be not formal in confessing and
 praying against your formality; a hypocrite,
 that hath got the Art to confess his hypocri-
 sie in hypocrisie, and seems to be displeased
 with himself for that sin, when he is not so
 indeed, may well have [*Lord have mercy*]
 written upon his door.

Labour to get those things which are the *Direct. 3.*
 very Life and Essence of a Christian;
 those

those things which are constituent of, and difference a Christian from all others. Some of these things have been hinted already, in shewing what a Formalist wants ; I shall touch upon them here , and add more. In general, Content not your selves to act as Christians , or in doing what a Christian doth ; 'tis one thing to be and do as a Christian, and another to be a Christian. There are especially five things which constitute, and are, as it were, ingredient into the very Essence of a Christian.

1. A sound conviction of, and deep humiliation for sin. This (as you heard before) the Formalist wants ; this is the ordinary Foundation of all that saving-work which the Spirit of God doth upon the Soul , *John* 16. 8. This is the ordinary forerunner of true solid Comfort: Conviction and Contrition are the inlets and preparatives to Consolation. Here begun the work upon those three thousand Converts, *Acts* 2. 37. upon *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. 9. And though its wrought in some insensibly , or with less noise and horror ; yet it is wrought in all really, who are saved in Gods ordinary way, and who are truly wrought upon.

Labour then to feel sin your heaviest burden ; and that not onely some one or few sins

fins of your life, but especially your heart-2 Chron.
 pollutions; be humbled (with *Hizekiah*) 32. 26,
 for the pride of your heart, and so for other
 inward lusts; yea, let your humiliation
 reach to your very duties; be ashamed at
 their deficiency and defilements; labour to
 see and be sensible, that all your righteous-
 ness is as a filthy rag; and cease not to fol-
 low the streams; until you are come to the
 Spring-head, viz. the corruption of Na-
 ture; and here sit down and weep, as the
Jews by the Rivers of *Babylon*: Never
 think your conviction and humiliation
 right, till you arrive at this, viz. A clear
 sight, and deep abiding sense of the univer-
 sal pollution of your nature, and the utter
 inability to any thing truly and spiritually
 good. Thus you must, as it were, begin
 the work again, raze all other, and lay this
 as a sound foundation; he that hath this,
 hath the root of the matter in him.

Isa. 64. 6.

2. Labour after a total abnegation of
 your own righteousness, duties, priviledges,
 performances---This is essential to a Chri-
 stian; in that brief, but full description of a
 sincere Christian, *Phil. 3. 3.* this is one of
 the three Ingredients, *To put no confidence in
 the flesh.* The first Lesson in Christ's School,
 is *Self-denial*, *Mat. 16. 24.* We must
 learn

learn that counsel, *Luke 17. 10.* to *acknowledg our selves unprofitable servants*; 'tis one of the hardest Tasks, but exceeding necessary. True Grace, and Christian Religion, is, [*perpetua natura violentia*] a doing violence to our selves, thwarting our passions, depluming our selves of all those Feathers wherewith we are wont to strut, and in which we have prided our selves. We must

Ma. 64. 6. learn to acknowledge with the Prophet, That all our righteousness is but as a filthy rag; that our best Duties, or seeming Graces, are in themselves but a beautiful Abomination; and to trust in them, is but to go a cleaner way to Hell. And what should hinder from this self-denial? What is thy righteousness more (nay, is it not in many respects less) then that of the Scribes and Pharisees? Read *Luke 18. 10, 11*—and compare; yet ver. 14. the self-abasing Publican went away more justified than the Pharisee; that is, the Pharisee was not at all justified; for there is not *magis & minus* in Justification. Away then with all thy proud self-reflections; think but how strict a disquisition shall be made at the day of Judgment, and how piercing the eyes of the Judge will be; and then consider whether thou shalt be able to stand before him in thy

thy own rags ; and if thou wilt not be able then to stand, why shouldst thou now glory in them ? Oh ! surely God can see beams in those duties, where thou canst not discern moists ; and will discover blemishes, where thou conceitest there is the greatest beauty.

3. Endeavour a cordial close with Christ upon Gospel-testimony. Here lies the main to which the two former are preparatory. This was *Paul's* great desire, *To be found in Christ*—Get therefore that precious Grace of Faith, which is the hand wherewith thou must accept Christ ; whatever thou hast, if this be wanting, thou shalt certainly perish ; *John* 3. 18, 36. The grand Enquiry at the great Day will be, Whether you believed or no ; though it's true, your work will be look'd into, but those as the proofs and evidences of the sincerity of your Faith : There will be no standing before the Judge, except himself be thy Advocate ; and this he will not be, but upon thy cordial acceptance of him now. O ! make out for Christ ; cry out, Give me Christ, or I dye. And that you may get Christ, you must not (as *Peter*) gird your Coat (your own righteousness) to you ; but as *Bartimæus*, cast it from you. Neither think that a blind, bold, adventurous rushing upon Christ, a meer adherence to him,

OR

or a confident perswasion of his good-will towards you in particular, is the all, or main of this Faith and Acceptance I am pressing; (this mistake will, I fear, be the ruine of Thousands,) There must be an absolute resignation of thy self to Christ, as well as reliance on him: 'Tis a *gross* & grievous mistake, to think that the strength of Faith lyes in the strength of a man's Fancy or Imagination, or of his perswasion that Christ dyed for him in particular: True Faith gives as well as takes; when you send for a Physician, and he undertakes and promises your cure, 'tis supposed you accept of him, and resolve to follow his Prescriptions, else you may miscarry: To accept Christ as your Saviour & Soul-Physician, necessarily includes your giving up your selves to follow his Prescriptions, else you but dissemble with him. This I hint to prevent mistakes about the nature of true Faith, (which are too ordinary.) Well, if thou who art yet a Formalist, wouldst be a Christian indeed, get out of all, and accept Christ as tendered in the Gospel.

4. See that thou have a thorow change of heart, *Eph. 4. 23. Be renewed in the Spirit of your mind.* 3. *Thes. 5. 23. Sanctified through out.* 'Tis not building on the old Foundation,

on, repairing and decking up the (old man) will serve turn? 'Tis not putting a new piece upon the old Garment; all is depraved in *Adam*; All must be renew'd in Christ; it's no less then a new Creation, that makes a Christian. That which is born of the flesh, (even *2 Cor. 5. 17*) the best of it, is no better than flesh, *Job. 3. 3, 6*. The best of a carnal man, is carnal; no man is born a Christian. There must be a putting off the old man, and putting on the new man, *Eph. 4. 22, 24. Col. 3. 9, 10. Psal 45. 14* forgetting and forsaking thy own People and *Bialt.* Fathers house; that is, as one well glosses, *Quicquid corruptionis ex matre afferimus aut quacumq; ex placâ institutione nobis adhaerent*; Whatever corruption we derived from the Womb, or contracted by Education, &c. Well, see that not only the branches of corruption be lopt off, but the root digg'd up; let sin be not only left, but loath'd; let duty be not only done, but delighted. See that the change be not only in the face of your conversations, but in the frame of your hearts, and bent of your affections; and see that it be the whole inward man, not understanding only illightned, or affections enlarg'd; but each faculty having its proper work of Sanctification wrought upon it, and above all, the Will brought to a chearful submission to, and compliance with the Will & Commands

of God; even in those things that are most opposite to your natural inclinations. This is a fourth Essential in a Christian.

1. Endeavour liveliness, vigour and sincerity in every duty; content not thy self, till thou hast got thy heart engag'd in duty. I bid thee not lay aside duty, (nay, rather be more frequent) but withall, more fervent and serious in it. Hear and practise; pray in the spirit; turn thy dead and heartless confessions, into heart-breaking acknowledgements; thy formal petitions, into earnest groans and breathings of soul, &c. and withall, see that thy end in all be right, viz. Gods glory, and thy souls advantage. Rectitude of ends, is a great piece of sincerity: Oh, this is very essential to a Christian, not onely to do duty, but to be lively, vigorous and right-ended in it; not onely to do it, but to do something by it, and receive something through it; and that it may be thus, make Conscience of seriousness and liveliness in the smallest duties, in thy daily Family-duties, yea, in thy very begging a blessing upon the creature. Formality creeps in at our ordinary and lesser duties, and by degrees mixes it self with our greater; out it (as much as possible) of your common and ordinary, and there is less danger it should spoil your extraordinary duties.

And thus I have in these five particulars,

included (I think) in it of that which is essential to a Christian. Oh that the Lord would persuade your hearts to endeavour after them, and that they may be found in every soul of you! These are they that do specify and constitute a Christian indeed, and that do distinguish him from, and set him above all others in the world; get these, and you are more then Formalists; but get them all; the third cannot be without the first and second, nor can the fourth and fifth, really be without the third; but where all these are found in conjunction, that soul may undoubtedly conclude its real Christianity.

As a singular help to rouse thee out of *Direct. 4.* Formality, represent to thy thoughts & meditations, the nature of God, especially in those awakening Attributes, his *Spirituality*, his *Omniscience*, *Omnipresence*, &c. together with the *dreadfulness of the day of judgment*. *Formality* is the *soul's sluggishness*, and therefore it needs those helps that are most *awakening*. And oh how would the lively representation of these things, startle you out of this *drowsie temper*! Is not God a *Spirit*? and *Spirits* are active; and how ill do they that are themselves active & vigorous, brook the laziness of others? Again, *Is not Gods eye upon me?* *Is he not present in a special manner to those that are in his service?* and *will*

not such a cold and careless temper be highly displeasing to him? Again, How shall I be able to stand before the Tribunal? Will not my Formality be then discovered? will not the careless performance, as well as total neglect of duty, be enquired into, and severely punished at that day? Such workings as these will be upon the heart that lies under the lively sense of those things; and they must needs put life into thy duties, and put thee out of thy dull and sluggish temper.

- Pray. 5.* Get a holy jealousy and suspicion of thy own heart; watch it as thou wouldst watch a lazy or unfaithful servant: Our hearts will do no longer then they are watched, and tasked, and followed; we must be winding them higher continually; if we let them slacken never so little, drowsiness steals upon them; it must be a jealous eye, and strict hand over them, that must keep them waking. Deal therefore with your hearts, as David, *Psalm 138. 1, 2.* Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. He calls upon his soul, thus must we, be often jogging them; say not, *A little more sleep, a little more slumber*—but rather, *Why sleepest thou, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?* Yea, when they seem to be most wakeful and active, there is need to watch them, especially after a duty done with more than ordinary fervor;
- intens-

Pray. 6.
p. 103

Intensness of action, causeth weariness, and weariness inclines to sleep and sluggishness.

Earnestly beg the continuance of *lively direct. 6.*
& quickning Ordinances, and beg *life and quickning* into those *Ordinances*. 1. Beg *lively and quickning Ordinances*. They are the *means* which God hath appointed to beget and keep life in the soul, the word is, The immortal seed whereby souls are begotten to God, 1 *Per. 1. 23*. But if this and other *Ordinances* lose their liveliness, by a dead, heartless, formal management, they will instead of rousing us out, lull us asleep in our formality. *Cor non faciunt quæ non habent* : How can those *Ordinances* make hearty Christians, which have no heart in them? *Ordinances* that are not good, and statutes whereby a soul *Ezek. 20.*
 cannot live, are amongst the saddest of 25.
 judgments : Dead forms are like the stone at the foot of the Bird, which hinders it from the first use of its wing : Also how prone is the last age of the world to fall into this drowsie temper? We have need of the most lively *Ordinances*, and all too little to keep us waking : Dull, heartless Preaching, Prayers, or other *Ordinances* will charm the Soul into a dead sleep, and will be as a soft Pillow under the

the elbow of drowsie sinners; and this (I am perswaded) is the great reason why the multitude dote on their old forms; because they will break no bones, they will not come near the quick: Men love to be rock'd & hush'd asleep in their Formality: Oh, but if ever you would get from under this corruption, it must be by quickning Ordinances: Oh let us beg of God, that his Worship may be dispensed in that way that is most advantageous to the putting souls into, and keeping them in a waking posture.

1. Beg life and quickning into Ordinances; the best Ordinances have no power in them, if they be not quickned by the Spirit. They are but like the Prophet's staff, 2 King. 4. 31. We shall never stand upon our feet, though the Word bid us stand, if the Spirit do not enter into us, and set us upon our feet, Ezek. 2. 1, 2. The weapons of our warfare are mighty, but it must be through God, 2 Cor. 10. 4. If we must have heartless Ordinances, earnest Prayer will either procure better, or a blessing upon what we have.

Presb. 7. Get into, and frequent the society of warm and hearty Christians; they are like sticks on fire, which will kindle others that are put to them, 2 Cor. 13. 2. Your zeal hath provoked many: If there be a

any spark under the ash, they will help to blow it up: If thou hast not the opportunity of conversing with living Christians, yet converse in the Scriptures, and other Records, where the Lives of such are Recorded for thy Imitation, they will shame thee out of thy Formality: they will mightily quicken thee, if there be any thing of true piety in thy heart: their zeal, forwardness, diligence in duty, their care and conscientiousness will put thee on in heavens way; Example is often more prevailing then Precepts. Therefore the Holy Ghost enjoins subjection, chastity, meekness, and other Christian virtues, to the Wife, that if the unbelieving Husband obey not the Word, he may be won by the Wives conversation.

Think often in what manner you hope to serve **Direct. 2.**
 God in glory; and how the Angels and glorified Saints do now serve him: are they now, or will you then be so cold, careless and heartless as you now are? *Psal. 103. 20.* The Angels excel in strength, doing his Commandments; And the glorified Saints, (*Rev. 4. 8. 5. 819, 13.*) *Rest not day and night, saying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty*--- Dost thou hope to be of that blessed society, and yet act so unlike them now? Should we not labour to be, and act, as we hope one day to be and act? It ill befits him who hopes one day to join in comfort with that heavenly quire, to be so unskillful and heartless in the service of God, *Phil. 3. 11.* It was *Pauls* endeavour and ambition, if by any means, to attain to the resurrection of the dead, i. e. to that measure and perfection which he hoped then to arrive at. True, we are clogg'd with flesh and corruption; 'tis impossible that our services should be so pure and
 undefiled,

undisfild; but we should be aspiring towards it: we should do violence to the flesh, that we may serve God in the Spirit:—how wretched are cold, worthless and lifeless servants to the eternal Reward? Let your hopes of Glory, and your expectations to be of that blessed Society, quicken and wind up your hearts to that pitch of zeal and fervency; so it did our blessed King James, 16. 26. 7. For the which promise our 12 Tribes instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. Let us then the same desire to the full assurance of hope, unto the end: Let us not be slothful, but followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the promises. Thus I have proposed some Remedies, which (if the Lord bless unto you) may be effectual, both to bring on those who are meer Formalists, to become sincere Christians, and to quicken those that are Christians indeed, to more vigour and liveliness in the practice of all Christian Duties. It were easie to have added many more; but I shall intreat you to think of these, and work them upon your hearts, and you shall, by the blessing of God, find them helpful to the end for which they were propounded. And now, Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his Grace.—*Act. 30 32.*

FINIS

